WITCHES ARE BACK!

REALMS OF FANTASY

PLUS:
The LATEST and GREATEST in FANTASY BOOKS

Curtis 02271

Arthur's Wishes
By Tim Meyers

Legend of Love
By Joe Mastroianni

Divine Desires
By Richard Parks

Pain Game
By M. Shayne Bell

$3.99
CAN: $4.99
April 1999

0 71486 02271 8 04

RETAILER: DISPLAY UNTIL APRIL 27

COMING SOON

To learn more about this title Call Toll Free: 1-877-ALL-LOL3

EXPANSIVE JOURNAL RECORDS EVERY EVENT—NO NEED TO WRITE THINGS DOWN!

Westwood™ STUDIOS

www.westwood.com

TRAIN HARD WITH FOUR GUILDS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR MIND AND BODY.

DEVELOP VALUABLE SKILLS BY COMPLETING QUESTS.

©1998 Westwood Studios, Inc. Lands of Lore is a registered trademark and Westwood Studios is a trademark of Westwood Studios, Inc. 3Dfx and the 3Dfx logo are registered trademarks of 3Dfx Interactive Inc. All rights reserved.

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Easy to play. Hard to resist.

ENLIST A MAGICAL FAMILIAR TO FIGHT BY YOUR SIDE AND DO YOUR BIDDING.

LANDS OF LORE III

ENGAGE IN REAL-TIME COMBAT AGAINST A HOST OF POWERFUL AND DEADLY CREATURES.

MASTER UP TO 65 SPELLS WHICH YOU CAN CAST QUICKLY AND EASILY USING HOT KEYS.

MANIPULATE YOUR INVENTORY SYSTEM WITHOUT LEAVING GAMEPLAY.

INTERACT WITH INTRIGUING CHARACTERS THROUGHOUT 6 WORLDS.

ROTATE THROUGH SPELL AND ITEM HOT BELTS TO IMMEDIATELY ACCESS WHAT YOU NEED.

CUSTOMIZE HOT BELTS WITH YOUR FAVORITE WEAPONS AND MAGIC ITEMS.

REALMS OF FANTASY

COVER: Keith Parkinson's glorious portrait proves that while little girls may love horses, warrior women desire dragons.
ABOVE: You'll love the fantasy art of Stephen Youll. For further visions, pay a visit to the Gallery on page 60.

Departments

6 EDITORIAL

8 LETTERS

12 BOOKS *BY GAHAN WILSON*
Avram Davidson haunts your house while Sargent repaints history with *Climb the Wind*.

22 MOVIES *BY MARTY BAUMANN*
Both good and bad witches ride the media broomstick into the new millennium.

28 FOLKROOTS *BY HEINZ INSU FENKL*
Shimchong, the blindman's daughter, gives the West a sample of Korean Folklore.

60 GALLERY *BY KAREN HABER*
Stephen Youll provides a peek at the secrets in the shadows.

74 GAMES *BY ERIC BAKER*
Bethesda's *Redguard* improves on a classic, proving that bigger is not necessarily better.

82 CONTRIBUTORS

Fiction

34 JORDAN'S WATERHAMMER
By Joe Mastroianni
This story might feel like science fiction, but its heart—the power of myth, language, and love to transform—is pure fantasy.

42 ARTHUR'S WISHES
By Tim Myers
Having power is one thing. Being able to wield it is another.

48 BAPTISM ON BITTERSWEET CREEK
By Christopher Rowe
Salvation is a slippery item. It can trickle through your fingers like water, if you can't find a safe place to keep it.

56 TAKE A LONG STEP
By Richard Parks
No matter how much we want to stop the Wheel from turning, there is nothing in the universe to put between its spokes.

66 THE GAME
By M. Shayne Bell
Sacrifice holds great power, and it's up to each individual to decide where to spend it.

REALMS OF FANTASY (ISSN 1071-1951) is published bimonthly by Sovereign Media Co , Inc , 11305 Sunset Hills Rd , Reston VA 20190 (703) 471-1556 Periodical Rate postage paid at Reston, VA, and additional mailing offices.

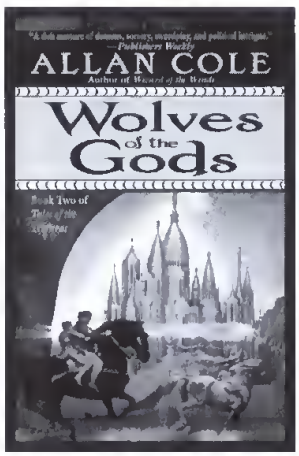
REALMS OF FANTASY, Volume 5, Number 4 © 1999 by Sovereign Media, all rights reserved. Copyrights to stories and illustrations are the property of their creators The contents of this publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part without consent of the copyright owner *Subscription Services and Information* Write to REALMS OF FANTASY **Circulation, P.O. Box 736, Mt. Morris, IL 61054** or phone (815) 734 1253 Single copies $4 00, plus $1 for postage to Sovereign Media Yearly subscription in U S A , $16 95, Canada and Overseas $21 95 (U S) Send editorial mail to REALMS OF FANTASY, P O Box **527, Rumson, NJ 07760.** REALMS OF FANTASY welcomes editorial submissions but assumes no responsibility for the loss or damage of unsolicited material Material to be returned should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope We suggest that you send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Sovereign Media for our author's guidelines **POSTMASTER Send address changes to REALMS OF FANTASY, P.O. Box 736, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.**

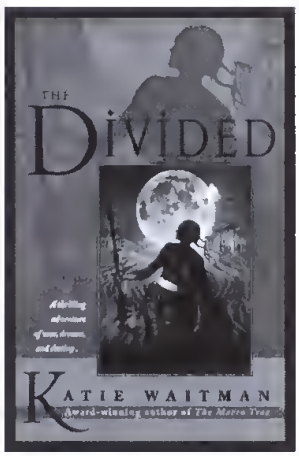
Activate Your Imagination...

"A rich mixture of demons, sorcery, swordplay, and political intrigue."
–Publishers Weekly

A nameless evil stalks the land, preying on all that lives–and only Safar Timura, the greatest wizard of the age, has the power to conquer it. But leading his people on a perilous journey to safety in a fabled, far-off land will be the least of Safar's challenges. For close on his heels is the tyrant king he once destroyed... now risen from the dead and thirsting for Safar's blood! The spellbinding sequel to *Wizard of the Winds.*

A Del Rey Paperback





Sekmé is a female Maurheti soldier who rose to the rank of commander at the age of twenty-four and has vowed to crush the forces of the enemy Tel-mari. Merkus is a Tel-mari freedom fighter and leader of the resistance against the Maurheti who dreams of an end to the slaughter. An ancient prophecy will bring them into a violent collision that will point the way toward peace...or ignite an all-consuming holocaust. The extraordinary new novel from the award-winning author of *The Merro Tree.*

A Del Rey Trade Paperback

DEL REY
Stories That Define Imagination
A Division of The Ballantine Publishing Group
On sale now at bookstores everywhere

Reader Reviews | Contests | Special Offers | Free newsletter
http://www.randomhouse.com/delrey/
Free book previews | Inside information | Author interviews

Science Fiction & Fantasy: Describing Our Field.

TIRED OF BATTLING OVER DEFINITIONS of Science Fiction and Fantasy? Maybe we're going at it the wrong way.

There are too many definitions, and the only one that comes close to being accepted is Damon Knight's: "Science fiction is what we point at when we say, 'This is science fiction.'" We all agree with this, however much we might disagree with the list of things Knight would point at. We each have our own lists.

I think Knight is on the right track here—rather than trying to *define* Science Fiction, we should instead try to *describe* it. A proper description might just show us how and where the definitions fail, and show the relationship, if any, of Science Fiction to Fantasy. Below, then, are my own descriptions of these genres, and two more needed ones.

1. "Science Fiction" is that branch of Imaginative Literature that deals with ideas. It therefore appeals primarily to the intellect.

2. "Fantasy" is that branch of Imaginative Literature that deals with images. It therefore appeals primarily to the emotions.

3. "Pseudo-Scientific Fantasy" (PSF)—a term coined by Heinlein; his definition was "fake 'science' fiction." I would define this very useful term as: "Fantasy that uses the images associated with science or Science Fiction."

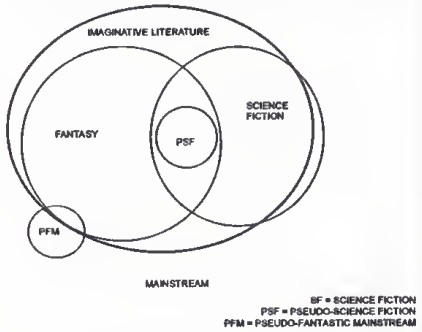
PSF includes what we call Space Opera or "Sci-Fi." Witness the *Star Wars* films, actually a Fantasy complete with wizard, wands, and magic. This is not necessarily a debased medium—consider the career of Ray Bradbury—however, it comprises most of the "Science Fiction" we see on screen, tube, and rack.

4. "Pseudo-Fantastic Mainstream" (PFM) fiction. I use this term to describe the debased popular Fantasy genre, lacking all imagination and filled with borrowed images. Some common types are: romance novels in "magical" pseudo-medieval settings; collections of puns involving whimsically named characters in whimsically named settings; fat, pretentious novels of political intrigue set in a relentlessly "magical" Poughkeepsie. Etc. Bat Durston rides again.

For authority, I refer the reader to Ursula Le Guin's essay, "From Elfland to Poughkeepsie." PFM fiction also need not be debased; for example see Guy Gavriel Kay's *TIGANA*, a thinly disguised historical novel about Italy.

These various relationships can best be represented by a chart, worth at least a thousand words:

Magic Realism is not in the diagram—it's left as an exercise for the reader. It has been called *mainstream with Fantasy elements*. It seems to



belong to that mainstream genre that likes to be called *Literature* but which should more accurately be called *Pseudo-Literature*. That is, fiction written to the tenets of the Professors of Literature. Real Literature, from Chaucer to Clemons, is not written to theory.

The science-fictional versions of Magic Realism tend toward pseudo-literature. It seems to me that they deal as much in idea as in image, however, and therefore classify as SF. Perhaps we need two circles on the diagram?

The identification of such subgenres as PSF and PFM helps to clear up much underbrush, and the chart helps still further by showing that these various genres overlap. The existence of PSF and PFM, and the overlapping of genres, explains many problems with definition.

For me, these descriptions are more useful than any definitions I have encountered, particularly when it comes to the relationships between the genres. For a definition must exclude in order to define, whereas a description is inclusive.

The puzzling tendency of some people to call one work Science Fiction while others call it Fantasy is now more understandable. If one perceives a work primarily in terms of its ideas, it will "feel" like Science Fiction. If

Continued on page 78

REALMS OF FANTASY

VOLUME 5 NUMBER 4

MARK HINTZ
Publisher

CARL A. GNAM, JR.
Editorial Director

SHAWNA MCCARTHY
Editor

STEPHEN VANN
Art Director

DAWN M. STEIN
Graphic Artist

RONALD STEVENS
Assistant Art Director

REBECCA MCCABE
Assistant Editor

BRIAN MURPHY
Editorial Assistant

PATRICIA A. ALLEN
LAURA CLEVELAND
Copy Editors

Contributors:
Tanith Lee, Charles de Lint, J.K. Potter, Noreen Doyle, Terri Windling, Gahan Wilson, Nigel Suckling, Dan Persons, Judith Berman, Richard Parks, S.N. Dyer, Mary O'Keefe Young, Carol Heyer, Annie Lunsford, Web Bryant, Paul Salmon, Ken Graning, Stephen Johnson, Tom Canty, Jane Yolen, John Berkey

DIANE BONIFANTI
Business Manager

AMANDA ZELONES
Finance Manager

KELLY KING
Circulation Consultant

CARI WYNNE
Production Assistant

ALI LORAINE
Production Assistant

STEVE DORBOWSKI
Circulation Manager

Curtis Circulation Company
Worldwide Distribution

Newsstand Consultant
ARTHUR O'HARE

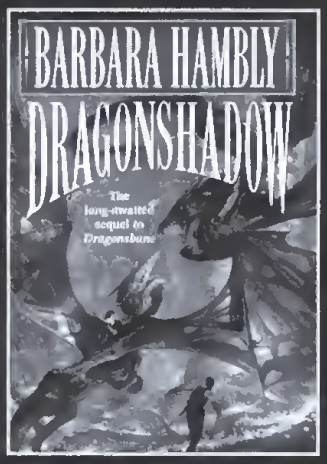
Advertising Offices:

JOE VARDA
Advertising Director
(703) 733-2160

KATE CHAPMAN
Advertising Representative
(703) 733-2171

11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston, VA 20190
703-471-1556 / FAX: 703-471-1559
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

DEL REY—

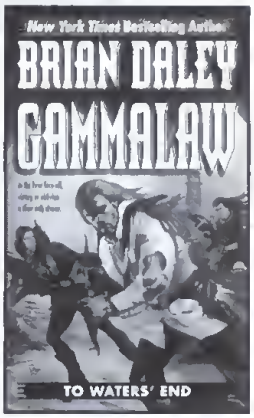


John Aversin gained renown as a dragon-slayer. But now he must seek the help of his onetime enemy—the mighty dragon Markeleb—to rescue his magebarn son from a fate worse than death...at the hands of soul-devouring demonspawn. The long-awaited sequel to **Dragonsbane**
A Del Rey Hardcover

"ABSOLUTELY MAGICAL... ALWAYS INTRIGUING."
—Richard Adams, author of **Watership Dawn**

Tag was happy as a pampered house cat...until the wise old Majicou summoned him to undertake a perilous quest. With a band of intrepid animal accomplices, he must travel to a distant land unknown to any human—except for the fiendish Alchemist, whose dire plans for the Queen of cats it was Tag's task to foil...of any cost.
A Del Rey Paperback

"HIGH-TECH, HIGH-TENSION ACTION...IF YOU WANT EXCITEMENT, YOU WANT GammaLAW."
—Donald E. McQuinn, author of **With Full Hangars**



Earth's elite GammaLAW military force makes its final stand in the battle to save the distant planet Aquamarine from the world-destroying invaders the Roke. The stunning sequel to **Smoke on the Water**, **A Screaming Across the Sky**, and **The Broken Country**—by a **New York Times** bestselling SF master.
A Del Rey Paperback

"BRUTAL AND BEAUTIFUL...[IT] GRABS AT YOUR HEART."
—R. A. Salvatore, author of **The Demon Apostle**

Within the young Elena rests the burgeoning magic that can save a once-glorious empire from the forces of a consuming evil. That is why the Dark Lord's minions pursue her...and that is why she must join together with the hunted and the cursed in an ultimate battle against doom.
A Del Rey Paperback

Unlimited access...

DEL REY
On sale in March at bookstores everywhere
Stories That Define Imagination
A Division of The Ballantine Publishing Group

Reader Reviews | Contests | Special Offers | Free newsletter
http://www.randomhouse.com/delrey/
Free book previews | Inside information | Author interviews

Dear Mrs. McCarthy,

I have read a lot of the letters written to you over the past few months. People praise your magazine and people put your magazine down. For the record, I do not know how anyone could find fault with *Realms*. I love it all—including the ads! I especially love the articles, illustrations, editorials, fiction and, of course, the Letters from your readers. I also think that your magazine is a great reference source for any future writers (the ones paying attention anyway)....And where else can one find such diversity of writing? To get such a collection in any other way, one would have to buy an entire bookstore! Finally, I would especially like to thank your assistant editor, Rebecca McCabe, for writing that short critique on a manuscript that I submitted. I know that none of us realize just how many letters and stories are submitted to you each month. In short—Great mag!

Sincerely,
Eric James Jalifi

Eric: Thank you for all the kind stuff. Rebecca says that on occasion, and unbeknownst to the neurons that transmit common sense to her brain, she feels compelled to jot off a personal reply or critique. She says this is not an invitation for various and sundry "new writers" to write and ask her to please read, edit, comment upon (and then publish) their stories...although these letters might tug at her heartstrings—the odds are pretty good she has a stack of one hundred or so manuscripts at any given time, waiting to be looked at and no one should get their hopes up. And chances are, any manuscript that warrants a critique just "ainit" ready to be published here...

Dear Shawna,

Received a copy of *Realms of Fantasy* with my story "Old Times." It is a pleasure to be working with you. Many thanks. New novel's out next month, Himes biography and a collection of essays, "Gently into the Land of Meateaters" in 1999. Also a major collection of poems from Michigan State University Press and a two-volume collection of my stories in the U.K.

With every best wish,
James Sallis

We always love to hear from our authors. Our readers often ask for information on the latest works available from their favorite writers and also writers they have heard of for the first time through Realms; *we are happy to pass any information we have along...*

Dear *Realms*,

It is really too bad I even have to write this letter. But the recent spate of people "who are canceling their subscriptions" and badmouthing realms because it dares to publish "fantasy literature" alarms me. Are they upset because you are choosing authors not churning out the same old "big-buff-barbarian-saves-scantily-clad-tribal-maiden-from-imminent-doom" scenarios? Or, perhaps they long for the ever-popular "knight-in-shining-armor-saves-scantily-clad-princess...?" These readers need to understand that fantasy goes well beyond those stone age staples and that your magazine is probably one of the greatest services done to fantasy authors and lovers in a long while. I imagine some of these people who complain are those who were irreparably scarred by high school lit courses. Too bad for them.

Jason L. Blair
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dan Perez,

Thank you for the article on *Highlander:The Raven*. I believe it to be a very promising show. Elizabeth Gracen is doing a wonderful job with an exciting character. However, why did it take so long for you guys to do a *Highlander*-related article? I remember a long time ago a reader wrote to you to ask the same question and was told something like the show was more "sci-fi" than fantasy. Well, I am glad you finally acknowledged this fine and worthy show.

Sincerely,
Rita Lyons
Pulaski, VA

Dear Editor McCarthy,

I am quite captivated by the diversity of fiction and articles found within your pages. I also enjoy the fantastic artwork found on the cover and throughout your magazine. In fact, these pictures often inspire me to write stories of my own. I was wondering if you have ever considered starting a Web page for *Realms*. I figure it would be a great way for you and your co-workers to stay in touch with your fans. I suggest a fantasy-based forum for your readers to discuss and offer opinions on fantasy fiction as well as to offer advice on writing itself and how to get published. You could post submission guidelines as well. I really think a Web page would add greatly to the popularity of your magazine and would be a treat for your most devoted fans.

Thanks for listening,
Shane P. Carr

A Web page could very well be in Realms' *future.*

Dear Ms. McCarthy,

I have been a devoted reader of *Realms* for three years and after Jeffrey Jeffcoat's letter in the December 1998 issue I had to write to you. I am appalled at the boorish behavior you apparently have to put up with from members of the "pre-published" community. Any writer worth their salt knows that rejection is just part of the business. I was rejected by *Realms* but instead of wasting my time being angry, I have chosen to work harder and write something better.

Misty Massey
Rock Hill, SC

Dear Ms. McCarthy:

Congratulations on another year of *Realms of Fantasy*. These are the stories I liked best out of the 1998 issues:

I Bring You Forever by Tanith Lee. This was very well plotted, getting tremendous scope into a short story. *Happy Ending* by James Van Pelt. Very powerful. *Kin to Crows* by Christopher Rowe. I couldn't stop reading this. *Protocols of Consumption* by Robert Charles Wilson. Well-developed characters. *Unicorn Stew* by William R. Eakin. Usually I dislike stories on the "Juniper tree" theme, but this overcame my prejudices. *Going Vampire* by Leslie What. A very well-realized and original take on the vampire theme. *Alice* by Peni R. Griffin. It is rare that a story keeps me as off-balance all the way through as this one did. *Tithing Night* by Louise Cooper. Good atmosphere.

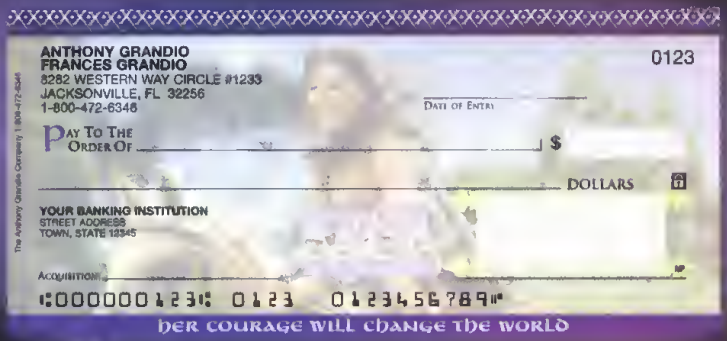
I enjoyed these stories tremendously and I also liked "Egyptian Motherlode," "Tiger, Tiger," "And Now Abithdeth These Three," "Dr. Rumpole," "The Inner, Inner City," and "The Pliable Child."

Unfortunately, the number of stories I didn't like seemed larger this year than any other year. I can't tell why this is...Maybe there were too many pieces set in 20th-century USA about unhappy kids or unhappy moms and not enough stories set "beyond the fields we know." Maybe authors weren't writing those kinds of stories this year, or I just had a grumpy year. In any case, I like Gahan Wilson's book column very much. It is my favorite feature in the magazine, as he writes with humor, affection, and enthusiasm for his subject. He is a real gem.

Sincerely,
Michael Samerdyke
Wise, VA

Always a pleasure to hear from you, Michael. It is nice to know there is a reader "out there" who takes his fiction seriously and who takes the time to comment upon particular stories. I am sure the above-mentioned writers are flattered to hear you enjoyed and appreciated their work. Very tactful not to mention the stories you didn't like by name—we appreciate that as well! We are confident the upcoming year will provide you with lots more fiction to contemplate and enjoy.

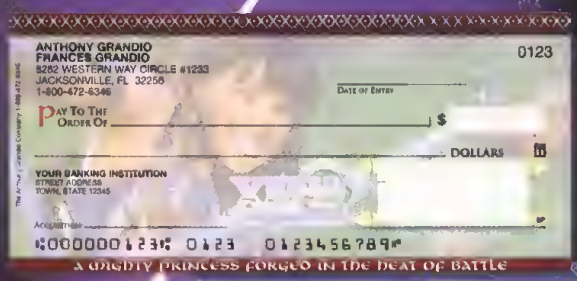
BATTLE ON...

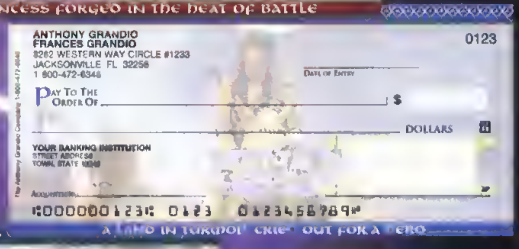


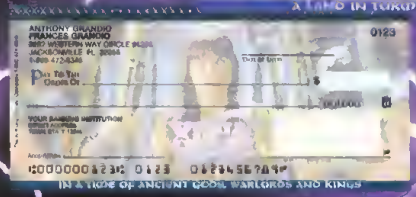
Bring the Power and Passion of Xena: Warrior Princess™ into everyday life with this exciting new limited edition check series from The Anthony Grandio Company!

Four colorful scenes with antique foil stamping depict the story from the Xena Scrolls, and bring the action to life. Xena: Warrior Princess checks are accepted throughout the New and Old World, and will make every day an adventure.

Order your limited edition Xena checks today and get this free matching color cover!







XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS™

Yes! I Want Xena: Warrior Princess Limited Edition Checks!

Instructions: To ensure correct bank codes, please follow these instructions carefully.

1. Send a reorder form or voided check from your existing check supply. Indicate any printing changes. No photocopies please!
2. Also send a deposit slip from your existing check supply.
3. Complete and include this order form.
4. Enclose a check payable to *The Anthony Grandio Company.*

Allow four weeks from receipt of order for regular delivery. Checks will be mailed to the address printed on your checks.

Mail to:
The Anthony Grandio Company
P.O. Box 23098
Jacksonville, FL 32241-3098

Satisfaction Guaranteed.

Xena: Warrior Princess is a trademark and copyright of Universal Television Enterprises Inc. Licensed by Universal Studios Licensing, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Name _____

Daytime phone # (____) _____
Please provide a daytime phone number where you can be reached if there are questions about your order

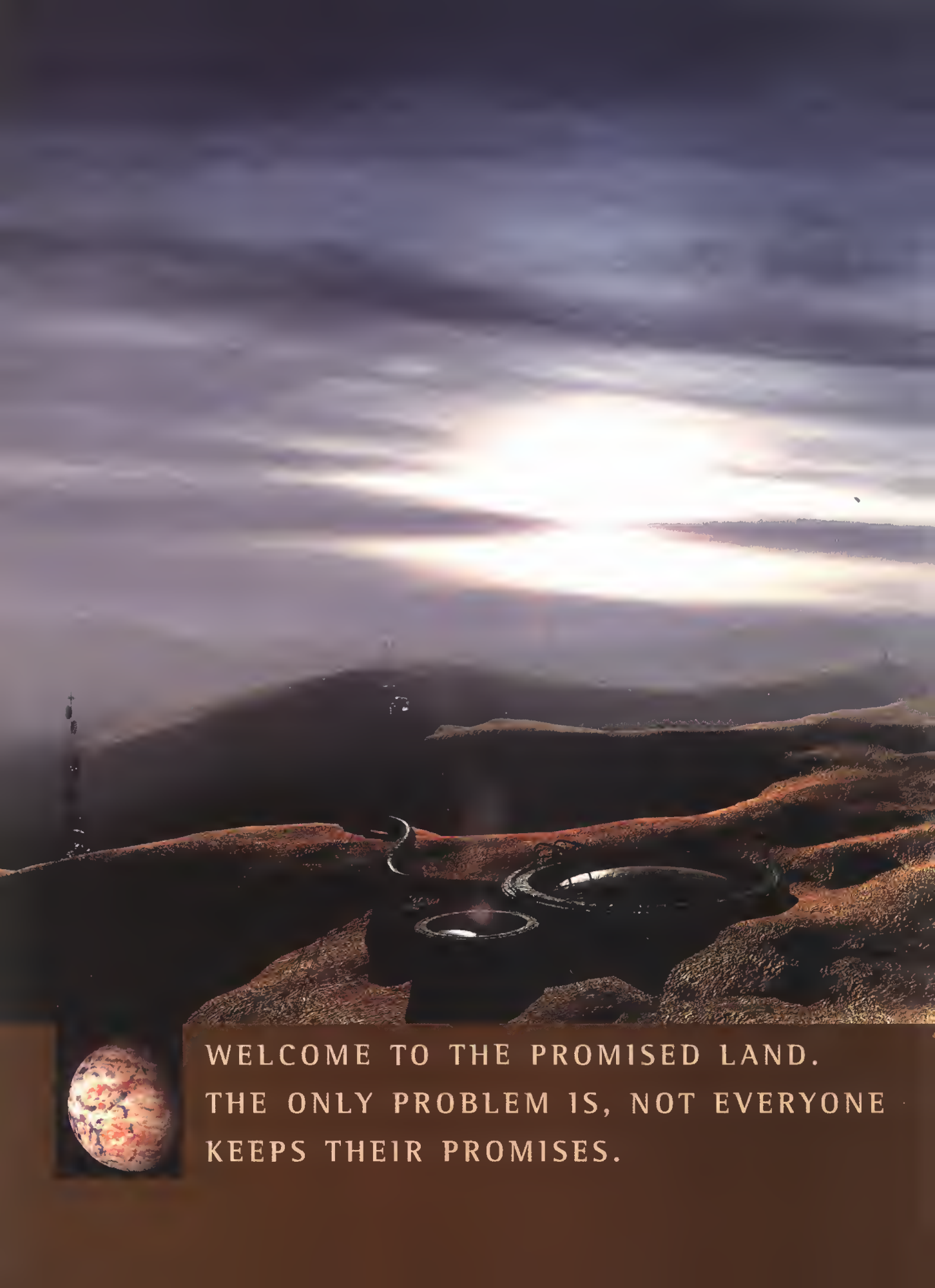
Start my checks at number _____
(If no number is provided we will start with 1001.)

To order gift certificates and commemorative sets, call 1-800-472-6346.

Please mark quantities and totals below

Xena: Warrior Princess Ltd. Edition Checks		
# of Boxes	Style /Price	
	One-Part (200 per box) X $19.95 =	$
	Duplicate (150 per box) X $21.95 =	$
Additional Xena: Warrior Princess Covers		
# of Covers	Price	
	X $4.95 =	$
FL sales tax (add 6.5%)		
Shipping ($1.25 per item)		$
For Priority Mail add $3.75		
YROF 52	TOTAL	$

The Anthony Grandio Company is proud to be part of the Xena: Warrior Princess realm.


WELCOME TO THE PROMISED LAND.
THE ONLY PROBLEM IS, NOT EVERYONE
KEEPS THEIR PROMISES.

SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI

From the creators of Sid Meier's Civilization® I & II, Colonization® and Railroad Tycoon®.

Design your land, air and sea units to best serve your strategy. With over 32,000 configurations you can build—and conquer on your own terms.

Grow stronger by building dozens of base facilities or working on astounding "Secret Projects" that ensure unique bonuses for your faction... and you.

Use terraformers to raise and lower the land, altering weather patterns and the course of rivers. Make the planet more suitable for you or harsher for your opponents.

2200 AD. What's left of civilization has landed on a mysterious alien planet. And it's up to you to chart the fate of humanity. Which of seven governing factions will you choose to lead? Each has its own strengths and weaknesses—and its own agenda. It's legendary Sid Meier strategy gameplay taken to a whole new level. Just don't forget to watch your back. Get the full story and demo at www.alphacentauri.com

Explore. Discover. Build. Conquer. For The Future Of Mankind.

FIRAXIS GAMES

©1998 Electronic Arts. Electronic Arts is a trademark or registered trademark of Electronic Arts in the U.S. and/or other countries. All rights reserved. Alpha Centauri and Firaxis Games are trademarks of Firaxis Games, Inc. Sid Meier's Civilization, Sid Meier's Colonization and Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon are registered trademarks of Microprose Software, Inc.

RATING PENDING RP ESRB

BY GAHAN WILSON

Avram Davidson haunts your house while Sargent repaints history with Climb the Wind.

I HAD THE HONOR OF STARTING OFF MY LAST COLUMN BY REVIEWING A FINE COLLECTION OF Avram Davidson's short stories and now it is my pleasure and privilege to bring to your attention *The Boss in the Wall* (Tachyon Publications, San Francisco, CA; 122 pages; trade paperback; $12.00), a truly remarkable short novel which he worked on during the last 10 years of his life with the much-needed help—he was dreadfully ill, tired out from a series of strokes and other exhausting maladies—of Grania Davis, his former wife and continuing friend.

It is a very atypical work for Davidson as it is a profoundly Lovecraftian sort of Horror novel. Its genesis is also extremely Lovecraftian since the inspiration for it came to him in a nightmare.

The method he used to shape that nightmare into a written, communicable work of fiction is also pure Lovecraft: He carefully builds a solid and convincing history to support the nightmare, skillfully using dates and specific references to actual contemporary events, then he reveals that history convincingly to the reader through the slow and craftily developed revelation of a series of ancient and modern documents and artifacts that have been both discovered and concealed by many severely conflicted and highly competitive scholars and pedants. These last are such convincingly drawn denizens of fusty academia that one swears (or at least this one does) that one has met at least some of them before whilst earning one's Doctoris Metaphysicae at dear old Miskatonic U.

BELOW: The Boss in the Wall *by Avram Davidson and Grania Davis will keep you awake a night listening to the things that go bump in the night. (Illustration by Michael Dashow.)*
RIGHT: *Venture into the darker realms of California with John Shirley's collection* Black Butterflies.

The information thus revealed in the book is, to put it mildly, disturbing. It seems that a strange and oddly creepy old superstition has been subversively floating about in the darker regions of American folk culture since way before the Civil War and maybe back to the start of the country. This superstition concerns a danger whispered to be now and then present in old houses, particularly those that have one way or another been left empty and derelict, on their own through lonely, cold, windy nights, undefended from strange wanderers for long periods of time.

The exact nature of this menace is unclear and the old, passed-on stories describing it differ considerably from region to region. The names given to it are ominous and conjure up a misty variety of images: Paper Man, Paper Doll Man, Greasy Man, String Fellow, Rustler or Clicker or Clatterer or—perhaps the scariest of them all—The Boss in the Wall.

It is said that the old houses are infested by these entities during their times of abandonment, that the creatures hide themselves quietly into them, creeping under the ancient floorboards or working their way between the walls. People say that if the human dweller in the house is sufficiently alert he or she may be able to hear the things clicking or rustling as they crawl and wiggle their way through their dark and musty hideaways. The clicking is said to be made by the creatures' teeth, for they are always cold and hungry; the rustling is said to be made by the old newspapers they have stuffed inside the hollows in their shriveled bodies, awful, unnatural crevices and gaps, produced by long periods of starvation and other privations.

The Boss in the Wall lays out some of these revelations at its start with a nicely nasty encounter between two wary scholars, then backs it up with an "Excerpt From the Interim Committee Report" which contains even more unpleasant information. It seems that the awful creatures now and then open their reeking mouths and bite, that the wounds fester, that there is talk of "amputations."

This grisly background established, we are introduced to the very likable Professor Vlad Smith, his nice wife Elsa Beth, and his precocious four-year-old daughter

Highlights from

http://renstore.com

The Chivalry Sports™

Renaissance

catalog magazine

Get your free copy by calling 1-800-730-5464 today!

A. Deluxe Topestry Lody's Bodice

A figure-flattering lady's vest with picadills and epaulets. Metal boning in the front strengthens the lacing holes. Fully lined. The fabric has a black background with green, pink, burgundy, beige, and blue flowers. Matching sleeves and cap are available.

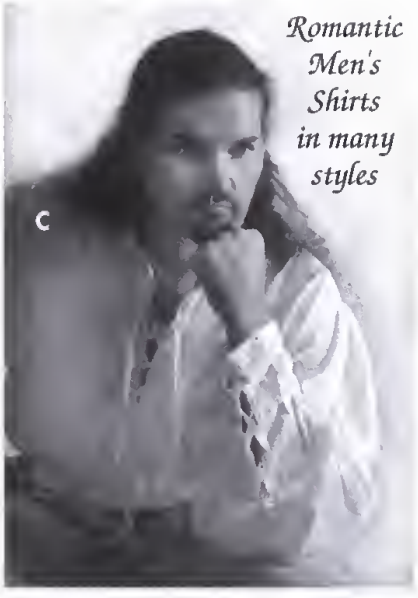
COO-16-3 Tapestry V–M **$89.95**
COO-16-3 Tapestry L–3X **$117.95**

Also available in solid colors and velvet. Call for $s

B. Cotton Twill Bormoid's Bodice

Inexpensive lady's vest with a figure-flattering cut. Laces on the shoulders and in front. Colors: red, black, blue, white, tan, forest green, and purple.

COO-140 Sizes V–L only **$44.50**
COO-143 Tapestry Barmaid's V–L **$67.95**



Romantic Men's Shirts in many styles

C. Lace–up Wedding Shirt

This elegant shirt, with its tiny rows of vertical tucks along the sleeves and front neck opening, will show the world your romantic nature. Available in white, natural or black. 100% cotton (Men's sizes V-3X).

VAG-E003 **$39.95**

D. The Verono Gown ond Holter

Our two-toned, brocade gown is reminiscent of the graceful gowns worn in the Italian Renaissance. It is offered in your choice of colors: midnight blue, burgundy, or black. Gold brocade trim accents the high waist and puffed sleeves. The gown comes with a reversible halter. Italian hood, chemise and brooch sold separately. Dry clean only

CHI-52 size VS-M **$199.95**
CHI-52 size L-X **$224.95**
CHI-52 size 2X-3X **$149.95**

E. Italion Hood

Matching hat for Verona gown gold, blue, burgundy or black

CHI-51 one size **$19.95**

F. Celtic Band Ring

The mystery of life cycle is echoed in the endless knotwork pattern. Pictured here is a knotwork design. Look for more ring in our catalog or on the website. Sterling Silver.

WDK-8237 Sizes 5-11
$8.95

G. Irish Shirt

Traditional shirt for wearing with old-style kilt, 100% cotton. White, natural or saffron gold. Comes in 2 sizes. S fits V-M. L fits L-3X.

COO-07
$64.95

Also shown are Tartan Kilts and moggans, Scottish Single-hand Broadswords, Hand-forge Iron Brooch, Super-long Latigo Belt and Slip-on Suede Leather Belt Pouch. Kilts from $78.00 to $147.95 for the "whole nine yards," belts from $10.95 and Leather Pouches as low as $11.

Register to win a sword or a brooch on the web at http://renstore.com

Sizing Informotion

Approximate equivalents. Ladies sizes: V=5–9, S=10–12, M=14–16, L=18–20, XL=22–24, 2X=26–28, 3X=30–32. Men's sizes: V=30–32 S=34–36, M=38–40, L=42–44, XL=46–48, 2X=50–52, 3X=54–56. Since store sizes vary, do not rely on this chart. Call for information on your size, have your measurements handy.

Shipping Informotion

For regular UPS in the USA: first item $5 and $1 for each added item. Foreign, US Postal delivery: $10 handling, plus actual cost of the shipping. Allow 4–8 weeks for arrival. Rush orders by phone only.

VISA

To order with credit card call 1-800-730-KING(5464) or pay by check: Chivalry Sports, 7718 E. Wrightstown Rd., Tucson, AZ 85715

TACHYON PUBLICATIONS
PRESENTS

THE BOSS IN THE WALL
BY AVRAM DAVIDSON
& GRANIA DAVIS

$12.00 paperback, $50.00 limited hardcover

The Boss in the Wall is a last powerful and major work by a major and powerful author.
—Gregory Benford

PORTRAIT OF JENNIE
BY ROBERT NATHAN

$14.00 paperback, $30.00 limited hardcover

The supernatural love story of a depression era artist and a young girl slipping through time, this spellbinding classic from 1940 is a masterpiece of modern fantasy.

Welcome back, *Portrait of Jennie*. It touched and frightened me when I was twenty-four. Now, once more, it touches and frightens.
—Ray Bradbury

Tachyon Publictions
1459 18th Street #139
San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 285-5615

Bella. Elsa's loveable and well-to-do Uncle Mose offers them a way out of the very much less-than-pleasant residence granted them by Bewdley College: He will buy them a house if they will let him spend his later years quietly and unobtrusively in one room of the place. The Smiths jump at the chance.

The place they locate is perfect in every way and of course they are delighted with it. Its solid antique charm, squared wooden pillars, verandah and all, win them over completely ... but we have read those first few pages and we know that even adorable old houses are now and then most unpleasantly infested!

I will not go into the following plot at all since it would be a great crime to tip you off in any way soever regarding the horrific (and they *are* horrific) events and revelations which follow. I also strongly suggest you spurn any other reviews or listen to the comments of any other prior readers of *The Boss in the Wall* before you settle down to let it personally frighten the bejesus out of you since it's a cold fact that Davidson and Davis have come up with one of the most satisfyingly godawful shockers I've encountered for I don't offhand know how long. You certainly do not wish to deprive yourself of the full experience.

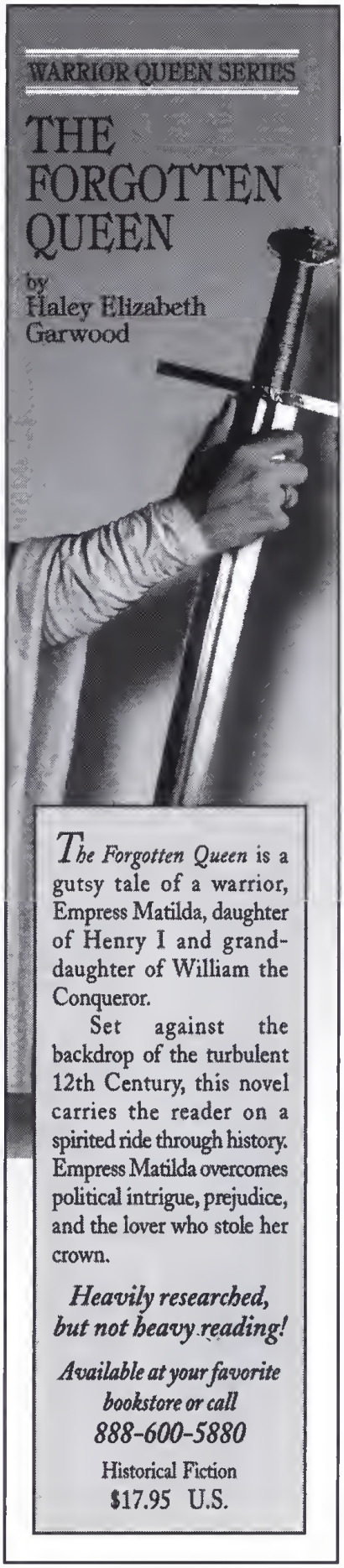
I will reveal that in spite of its relatively short length this novel does not confine itself to the horrendous adventures of the professor and his family, though by no means does it shortchange them even as it spreads out generously in a wide variety of directions. It pursues the interestingly varied ramifications of its seedling nightmare with spectacular imagination and ingenuity and is unafraid to wander off into more than a little delightfully ghoulish humor since this work *is*, after all, an enterprise guided by the Saturninely subtle genius of Avram Davidson.

One gentle word, since I feel there are certain moral responsibilities attached to turning out these little notices for *Realms of Fantasy*, I'd appreciate your allowing me to pass on a recent personal experience just to give you an idea of how really effective this small gem of a book is.

I began the review you are reading yesterday afternoon and of course this involved thumbing through the pages of the book as I wrote in order to refresh my memory as to its many horrors and avoid forgetting neatly nasty presentations of this or that appalling notion.

Around three o'clock in the morning, long after I had retired and gone to sleep, a squirrel scuttled across the roof over the bedroom of the charming old house in which I live. The noise woke me and my eyes opened to the sight of the old open doorway leading to the darkness of the old stairway landing beyond and I must admit that a sudden awesome realization on my part that *the darkness itself was old* led me to think a little more thoughtfully than I had up until that very moment of the Paper Man, of the Greasy Man, of the Rustler, of the Clicker, and the Clatterer.

So if you do decide to sample the many



scary pleasures in this small masterpiece, please do be warned: *The Boss in the Wall* really *does* bite!

***Climb the Wind** (by Pamela Sargent; Harper-Prism, NYC; 436 pp., hardcover; $25.00)* is a most enjoyable and entertaining new alternate history adventure which I believe brings a new dimension to the form which has up to now never really been explored.

Until this book the characters in all the other alternate histories which I've encountered have been firmly and pretty unquestioningly placed *within* that alternate history, but that is, when you come to think about it—as Pamela Sargent, the author of this book, clearly has done—not really the way things are.

The truth is that anybody who has the patience and intelligence to seriously ponder their situation in any history, real or imagined, for more than five minutes straight, must find themselves plagued with the very sort of doubts and imaginings about the ephemeral nature of that history and their interdependence with it that has led to the creation of the alternate history fiction form in the first place.

This whole notion is brought to the foreground in *Climb the Wind* because its what-ifs deal primarily with the original inhabitants of this great chunk of land that has become the United States of America: the Shawnee, the Cherokee, the Lakota, and the other great tribes of humanity indigenous to our region.

These people all appeared to have been on a much more friend footing with the land on which they lived than the Europeans who had intruded upon it. They tended to go along with things as they were, to respect animals, to venerate the status quo of nature. They were, in short, of a receptive rather than of a controlling bent. They did not try to battle with and reshape the world about them, they were much more inclined to revere and study its ways so as to learn the best method of living peaceably in accord with them.

One result of this acceptant frame of mind was a continuing emphasis on the contemplative mode. If things became confusing or discordant it was not unusual for them to seek a place of quiet so that they could themselves be quiet and in that stillness open their consciousness to the subtler aspects of the constant teaching of nature they believed were all about them. The dreams and visions produced by these practices were enormously important to them and figure prominently in all their recorded decisions, be they on a large or a small scale.

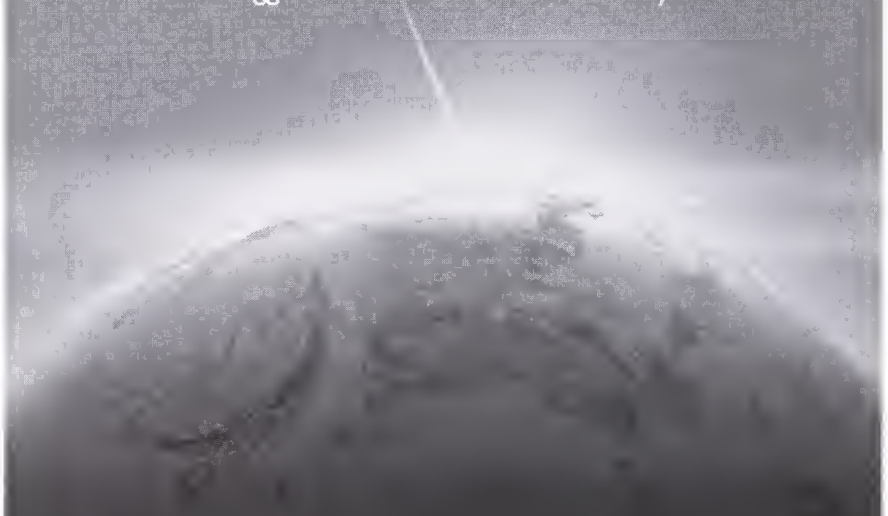
A hugely important aspect of these received visions was their use in determining future actions. No chief would think of fighting a war or making any other important political decision without seriously consulting either his own or some highly respected shaman's vision of what was likely to come if that move was made. These people believed history could be read in both directions.

The dangers and confusions inherent in the possibility of these vitally important visions now and then breaking through to an

In the war between Good and Evil, the final battle has begun...

A blinding light that sears human flesh.
An idealistic American doctor with miraculous powers.
A dark prophet who leads his followers to their doom.

In strife-torn Jerusalem, the omens are falling into place. Dr. Michael Aulden senses he has a key role to play in the battle for the fate of the world. But first he must unravel the secret of his own identity. The first of a series created by #1 bestselling author Deepak Chopra and inspired by the ancient texts of the Kabbala, *Lords of Light* is an awe-inspiring adventure—a saga of the ultimate struggle for control of human destiny.



DEEPAK CHOPRA'S LORDS OF LIGHT

CREATED BY DEEPAK CHOPRA AND MARTIN GREENBERG

St. Martin's Paperbacks

Legends of England Inc (dept. RF4/9).
PO Box 417, Highlands N.J. 07732-0417

Payment:
Credit Card: 24hr Orderline
Call 732-872-9400 Fax: 732-872-9441
Cheque: Enclosed with order
Money Order: Enclosed with order
Payments Made Payable To: Legends of England Inc.
N.J. State residents please add 6% Sales Tax.
Alaska, Hawaii and rest of world:
To mainland USA rate add an additional $25.00.
Canadian Orders: Credit Card or US funds only please.
Canadian Shipping: Add $10. to US rate.

***Shipping & Handling** - Mainland USA- Order Value:*

up to $30.00 add $6.50;	*$120.01 to $135.00 add $13.50*
$30.01 to $45. add $7.50;	*$135.01 to $150. add $14.50;*
$45.01 to $60. add $8.50;	*$150.01 to $165. add $15.50;*
$60.01 to $75. add $9.50;	*$165.01 to $180.00 add $16.50.*
$75.01 to $90. add $10.50;	*$180.01 to $195.00 add $17.50.*
$90.01 to$105.01 add $11.50	*Over $195.00 add $18.50*

MUSIC FROM A DISTANT AGE....
REDISCOVERED FOR THE NEW MILLENIUM

WHAT IF THE KING SHOULD COME TO THE CITY
a new CD of Renaissance Keyboard Music unlike any other wrought in the *Spirit of Both Then and Now*

Send $14.95 plus $2.50 shipping and handling
(NY residents add 8.25% sales tax) to: Penguin on the Telly Ltd.
JAF Station, PO Box 2260, New York, NY 10118
Visit our website: www.penguin-ltd.com
Tel/fax 718/852-1286

alternate history puzzlingly different from the one presented in the novel—say one very like our own—form some of the most interesting and innovative aspects of this book.

Climb the Wind wonders what would have happened had these people found a great leader, a mighty Khan who could have managed to bind all their isolated and often warring tribes together under a great treaty. Imagine how very different it would have been if the once again United States had found itself moving westward after the Civil War into a wilderness controlled by a united native population? What if the leader of that huge mass of humanity had the wisdom to dig the gold from the ground he and his people controlled and use it not only to buy the best weapons armament manufacturers were eager to sell, but to exploit the possibilities of an altogether new armamentarium, say explosive rockets developed by clever Chinese engineers brought to this continent for cheap labor by the railroad robber barons.

It would have been quite another situation.

Pamela Sargent advances this interesting speculation within a well-structured adventure story involving all sorts of intriguing rogues and idealists and just plain heroes and heroines.

There is Grigory Sergeievich Rubalev, the sinister, brilliant, and terrifically ambitious expatriate from New Archangel in the formerly Russian colony of Alaska. He is, for reasons not quite clear, deeply involved with and supportive of Touch-the-Clouds, the Chief of the Lakota who has had enormous recent success in persuading other great leaders such as Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse to join forces with him together with their followers. There is Ely Parker, President Ulysses S. Grant's appointee as commissioner of Indian affairs; he is himself a Senecca with the prophetic name of *Poyeshao*, "The Keeper of the Western Door." There is the beautiful Lakota who, with one old woman, were the sole survivors of the extermination of her village by members of the U.S. Cavalry. She is a ward of the Russian, but now she has met Lemuel Rowland who fought for the Union during the Civil War as a member of the Iroquois volunteers and has only recently decided to extricate himself from the Washington bureaucracy. Who knows what will happen between them?

As if that were not enough the reader of *Climb the Wind* will also encounter such oversized characters as Calamity Jane, generals Sherman and Sheridan, George Armstrong Custer, Mark Twain, Buffalo Bill Cody, Thomas Alva Edison, Annie Oakley, Teddy Roosevelt, and Frederick Douglass, just to skim off a bit of the cream. All of them are employed very interestingly and insightfully. Myself I found the account of what happens to Edison after he fails to pitch the Eastern establishment the notion of the use of electricity on the grand scale to be a particularly clever and informative alternate history maneuver.

Wizard of Dragon Fire

A genuine Austrian crystal glitters from his enchanted wand.

Plate shown smaller than actual size of 8" (20.32 cm) in diameter.

...y brings ... plate to life. Hand-set with a sparkling Austrian crystal.

Do not doubt the powers of the wizard. For with one touch of the blazing crystal in his enchanted wand, he can summon the dragon—and the raging fires this awesome creature brings from his hidden lair deep in the earth.

"Dragon Fire." A vision of mystical power from celebrated fantasy artist Myles Pinkney. Aglow with the fire of a hand-set Austrian crystal. In the tradition of the most prized collectibles, this heirloom collector plate is crafted of *Royal Doulton Fine Bone China* and lavished with breathtaking color. It is hand-numbered and bordered in *24 karat gold*. Each plate bears the artist's signature mark on its reverse side.

This Limited Edition will be *closed forever* after just 45 firing days. Available *exclusively* from The Franklin Mint.

The Collector's Choice in Heirloom Plates

A Limited Edition Collector Plate.
Hand-Numbered and Bordered in 24 Karat Gold.

The Franklin Mint
Franklin Center, PA 19091-0001

Please mail by May 31, 1999.

Please enter my order for Dragon Fire by Myles Pinkney.
I need SEND NO MONEY NOW. I will be billed $29.95* when my plate is ready to be sent. *Limit: one plate per collector.*

*Plus my state sales tax and $3.95 for shipping and handling

SIGNATURE _____
ALL ORDERS ARE SUBJECT TO ACCEPTANCE

MR/MRS/MISS _____
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ADDRESS _____ APT # _____

CITY/STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE # (_____) _____

20351-32-001

Satisfaction Guaranteed. If you wish to return any Franklin Mint purchase, you may do so within 30 days of your receipt of that purchase for replacement, credit or refund

THE FRANKLIN MINT

Obviously I am not going to tell you how it all comes out but I can assure the resolution is quite credible and the reaching of it consistently entertaining. Someone really ought to make a movie of the thing as it could be a whopper of a film.

The only negative thing I can think to say about this very well-crafted book is that its convincing examination of other quite plausible possibilities to the dreadful and shameful atrocity which actually took place makes that awful, irreparable stain on our history only the harder to bear.

Let's hope it inspires at least a little corrective action.

There can be no disputing that there is no more comprehensive guide for a dreamer aspiring to create a fantasy world of his or her own and to populate it with creatures and adventurers solid enough to carry that dreamer through a book or a series of books all his own than that body of material left behind by J.R.R. Tolkien and lovingly fathered and arranged into a small library of books by his son, Christopher.

The problem is that there is so much material to absorb and that it is all so very complex and incredibly erudite. I have dutifully collected the many volumes of *The History of Middle Earth* and have spent many hours profitably browsing through them, but I freely confess that I am a very long way from having read it all and I admit it is unlikely that I shall ever do so.

And, of course, that's just the beginning, aside from reading and rereading the actual, original books themselves (which is, of course, unmitigated joy). Tolkien attracted an amazing number of biographers and scholars, good and bad (ah, yes—there's the great job of separating the sheep from the goats in this business!) And they must be plowed through or thoughtfully studied according to their just desserts for there's much of great value to dreamers to be mined from those huge heaps of ore.

I would say that anyone really serious about doing something genuine and good along the lines of myth spinning would be very foolish not to spend as much time as they can bear struggling with these vast sources of information and inspiration, but now there has come something along the same lines which is much more approachable. It is not a vast and towering Alpine range like the Tolkien material, but something more in the nature of a manageable mountain, though it is certainly tall enough to have a cloud or two at its peak, and its slopes do not lack for gold.

The Riven Codex *(Del Rey/Ballantine Books, NYC; 394 pp., hardcover; $27.50)* by David and Leigh Eddings is the sourcebook created by them in order to provide a solid basis for writing their Belgariad and Malloreon fantasy novels. Here are the histories and holy books and biographies and hymns and magical spells and homey, mundane details which they needed to get straight before they could set out to write their first-rate, lovingly crafted series of best-selling books.

In this very interesting volume the Eddings are generous enough to take you behind the scenes and show you the com-

Continued on page 80

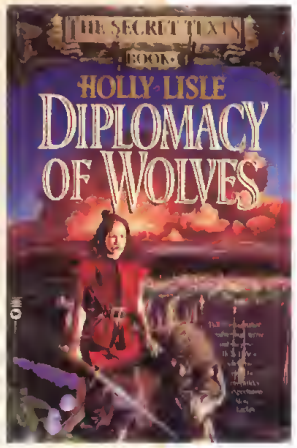
Books to Watch For

A Cavern of Black Ice, by J.V. Jones, Warner Aspect hardcover, $24.00. This, the first book in the *Sword of Shadows* Trilogy, is set in the world of the original "Book of Words" novels. Raif Severance and Ash March are swept into a series of dark and dangerous events. These two young residents of the northern territories will be challenged by "a deadly wilderness where nature and the gods have no mercy..." A stark and unusual epic-fantasy by one of Aspect's most popular authors. A foundling daughter haunted by ominous dreams and a warrior beckoned by the summons of a raven. Let the tale unfold....

The Science of the X-Files, by Jeanne Cavelos, A Berkeley Boulevard paperback, $12.95. *Realms* book reviewer, Jeanne Cavelos, has written an exceptional book of science and wonder. *The X-Files'* most compelling episodes are examined herein ... is there truth to the tales of experimental science and science gone awry? "What sort of nutrition could be derived from a diet of human livers?" "Could bees be genetically altered to sting a person with smallpox?" "Could concentrated human pheromones really make Scully do the wild thing with a stranger?" Jeanne, a former astrophysicist and mathematician, entertains, enlightens, and exposes the viability of the science in many of your favorite episodes. A must-read for skeptics and believers alike ... or for those of you who thought that "extreme science" existed only in the realms of Chris Carter's imagination.

Diplomacy of Wolves: The Secret Texts, by Holly Lisle, Warner Aspect trade paperback, $12.99. Book "One" of a three-book series by the acclaimed author of *Glenraven*. Royal weddings, diplomatic missions, and the mysterious "Mirror of Souls." Young Kait Galweigh must venture far from her home and its internal dilemmas to a far-off continent. This charming saga is replete with evil magic, brand new worlds, and a heroine you will be unlikely to forget.

Dragon Tempest, by Don Callander, Ace paperback, $5.99. An action-filled, humorous novel of great adventure and all the aspects of a true fairy tale. Violent seas filled with savages and monsters, a magical dragon called Retruance, a lovely princess in need of a rescue, and a very wicked kidnapper. Shipwrecks and librarians add to this pleasurable romp of fantastical circumstance by master dragon author Don Callander. An appealing dragon tale for all *Realms* dragon lovers and for those just waiting to be introduced to their very first dragon.



The High House, by James Stoddard, Warner aspect paperback, $6.50. The High House, Evenmere, has seldom been seen by ordinary men. Author Sean Stewart calls this a "delightful secret passage of a book..." and so it seems. A high fantasy with intelligence and literary power—this novel features man-eating furniture, attic dragons, and the man called Carter Anderson, born in the Lilac Room..."who left of his own accord, and was summoned back in the house's time of need..."

The Gilded Chain—A Tale of the King's Blades, by Dave Duncan, Avon Books hardcover, $23.00. A "Three Musketeers" saga with a magical bent. Epic sword and sorcery adventure and the story of an elite warrior called Durandel. From his grim childhood at Ironhall School to the greatest "Blade" of all ... what glorious mission awaits our great knight? What twist of fate is in store for this brave and gallant swordsman? Enough perils, opulence, and dazzling adventure to satisfy even the most jaded of fantasy readers. Former geologist Duncan has written a rousing book sure to please any sword-loving "armchair adventurer."

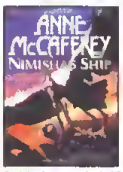
Most people use less than 20% of their mind.

THE SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB®

gives you what you're missing.

0042 $27.95/$14.98

1206 $27.95/$13.98

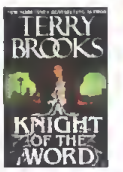


3103 $25.00/$13.98

4176 $9.98x

3699 $25.00/$9.98

0257 $19.95/$12.95



1115 $25.95/$12.98

5371 $27.50/$13.98

5132∞ $23.00/$11.50

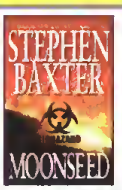
5587 $9.98x

2709 $29.95/$14.98

2238 $23.95/$11.98

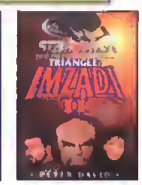
2964 $25.95/$12.98

2915 $24.00/$10.98



1560* $24.00/$10.98

1214 $22.95/$11.50



0380◊ $23.00/$11.50

Q-Space, Q-Zone, Q-Strike
0034◊ $14.96x

The Book of the Damned, The Book of the Beast
7609#* $39.90/$10.98

The Book of the Dead, The Book of the Mad
5264#* $39.90/$10.98

Burnt Offerings, Blue Moon
0398* $14.98x

Lord Valentine's Castle, Majipoor Chronicles, Valentine Pontifex
1073* $17.98x

Three Against the Witch World, Warlock of the Witch World, Sorceress of the Witch World
4572 $14.98x

Dealing With Dragons, Searching for Dragons, Calling on Dragons, Talking to Dragons
2360# $66.80/$14.98

The Paradise Snare; The Hutt Gambit, Rebel Dawn
1701Δ $14.98x

3640Δ $23.95/$11.98

5082-9999§Δ
$49.95/$24.98

Start with **5** books for **$1** with membership

PLUS The Sandman: Dream Country **FREE**

5579 $35.00/$19.98

6916 $12.98x

0315+ $25.90/$14.98

1347† $24.95/$11.98

7 REASONS TO JOIN NOW: **1. Joining is easy.** Choose 5 books for $1. Your bill (including shipping and handling) and your FREE GIFT—*The Sandman: Dream Country*—will come when membership is confirmed. **2. Your satisfaction is guaranteed.** If you're not happy with your 5 books, return them within 10 days *at our expense*. Your membership will be canceled; you'll owe nothing. *The Sandman: Dream Country* is yours to keep. **3. Save up to 65% off publishers' hardcover edition prices.** Every book we offer is a high-quality, full-text edition, sometimes altered in size to fit special presses. Just pick at least 4 more books at our regular low prices during your membership. Take up to 2 years! Then you may resign any time. **4. Extra bonus!** Take a 6th book now for $3.98, plus shipping and handling, and reduce your membership agreement to only 3 books. **5. A FREE Club Magazine** comes to you up to 17 times a year—plus up to 2 special issues. Each reviews the Featured Book Selections plus dozens of alternate books. Some are exclusive Club editions you won't find anywhere else. **6. Ordering is simple.** Featured Book Selections are sent to you automatically. To cancel—or order other books—simply mail in your Member Reply Form or contact our Web site by the marked date. Shipping and handling (plus sales tax, where applicable) is added to each order. You'll always have 10 days to decide. If your Member Reply Form is late and unwanted books arrive, please return them *at our expense*. **7. Easy Ordering.** As a member, you can also order books via our Web site: **www.sfbc.com**

Prices in fine print are publishers' hardcover editions. **Prices in bold print are Club editions.** * Explicit scenes and/or language + Softcover edition # Combined publishers' editions x Hardcover edition exclusively for Club members § Counts as 2 choices Δ ®, ™ & © 1997 Lucasfilm Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Used Under Authorization ◊ © 1997 Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved. STAR TREK is a Registered Trademark of Paramount Pictures † © 1997 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. ∞ © 1997 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation F526

THE Science Fiction BOOK CLUB.

MAIL TO: *The Science Fiction Book Club*
6550 East 30th St., P.O. Box 6367
Indianapolis, IN 46206-6367

YES! Please enroll me in *The Science Fiction Book Club* according to the risk-free membership plan described in this ad. Send me the 5 BOOKS I've indicated and my FREE *The Sandman: Dream Country*. Bill me just $1, plus shipping and handling.

SAVE EVEN MORE! Send me this book now and reduce my commitment to 3 books. Bill me just $3.98, plus shipping and handling. (Books that count as 2 choices are not eligible.) (write book number) PS380 06

Write book numbers here

If you select a book that counts as 2 choices, write the first 4 digits of the book number in one row of boxes and 9999 in the next. 25

Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. _____
(please print)

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone, please (____) _____

If you're under 18, your parent must sign here. _____

Members accepted in U.S.A. and Canada only. Canadian members serviced from Canada, where offer is slightly different. Sales tax added where applicable. We reserve the right to reject any application. F526 ROF 4-5/99

DEL REY **profiles**

NAME: Friar Eldritch Maledictus

PROFESSION: Abbot, Order of the Accursed Monks of Our Lady of Perpetual Anguish

HOBBIES: Meditation, contemplation, bread baking, heretic torturing, meddling in affairs of state, rites, rituals, chanting, manuscript illumination, conjugation of Latin swear words, silence

QUOTE: "Sin happens."

HIS DRINK: Sacrificial...uh, sacra*mental* wine.

LAST BOOK READ: THE DEMON APOSTLE by R. A. Salvatore "A most rousing finale to Salvatore's magnificent Demon Wars trilogy! The fearsome demon dactyl is down...but not out. And our hero, Elbryan Wynden, and his companion, Pony, mistress of gemstone magic, are by no means out of the woods. With goblin hordes aplenty, civil war in a ravaged land, fierce battle between church and state, damning accusations of heresy, a savage monster bishop, and the threat of utter demonic domination...what's not to love?"

Friar Eldritch Maledictus

DEL REY
Stories That Define Imagination
A Division of The Ballantine Publishing Group

THE DEMON APOSTLE

The stunning conclusion to the Demon Wars trilogy by R. A. SALVATORE—*New York Times*-bestselling author of *The Demon Awakens* and *The Demon Spirit*

"SALVATORE'S BEST WORK SINCE THE DARK ELF SERIES...AN ENTHRALLING ADVENTURE STORY...READERS WON'T SOON FORGET."
—Terry Brooks

"A NEW CLASSIC! WONDERFULLY TOLD! FANS WILL LOVE IT!"
—Troy Denning, author of *The Parched Sea*

"Three sets of eyes came up, the terrified goblins staring at each other, none daring to speak a word.

"Nightbird dropped from a branch to land right between them. Out went his fist, out went the ball pommel of his sword, then ahead came the flashing blade. A backhand strike took down the second, slashing diagonally from shoulder to hip, as it staggered from the force of the driving pommel, and then the ranger reversed his momentum and spun about, dropping a powerful overhead chop on the first as it tried to recover from the punch in the face, as it tried to bring its unwieldy spear to bear.

"It took the ranger longer to extract Tempest from the goblin's head than it had to kill all three."
—from *The Demon Apostle*

GET THEE TO THY LOCAL BOOK-A-TORIUM... AND PARTAKE!

Reader Reviews | Contests | Special Offers | *Free* newsletter

http://www.randomhouse.com/delrey/

Free book previews | Inside information | Author interviews

BY MARTY BAUMANN

Both good and bad witches ride the media broomstick into the new millennium.

YOU MAY NOT BE AWARE OF IT, BUT LIKE THE CHILL OF AN AUTUMN EVENING, THEY'VE crept furtively into your home. A spell has been cast over the modern media, making desirable that which once was forbidden. Trundling into the millennium on little cat feet, the charismatic charm of the witch is once more a staple of popular culture. In short, witches are back in a big way.

As a recent example of this clandestine cultural phenomenon, let us point to the intended "come back" vehicle of floundering film star Sandra Bullock; *Practical Magic*, the semi-saccharin story of supernatural sisters (Bullock and Nicole Kidman) performed well enough at the box office to prove that witches, once the bane of Salem and Puritan sublimation, are ready for the leap into Y2K.

Veronica Lake stars in French director Rene Clair's 1945 classic I Married a Witch.

Likewise, the political arena reintroduced into our beleaguered lexicon what is arguably the most overused catchphrase of the decade: witch hunt. You can't ask a DC cabby for directions these days without being accused of hunting witches.

There is one other source of modern-day evil that cannot go blameless: Aaron Spelling Productions. Spelling's new series, *Charmed*, centers around the travails of a trio of comely girl witches. Making no secret of its sexual undertones and unashamedly flaunting a high-school mentality, the show is the surprise hit of the television season, at least by the standards of the fledgling WB network.

Actually, Spelling was slow to catch on. ABC's *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*, based loosely on a long-running Archie Comics character, features 20-something cutie Melissa Joan Hart in the title role. As part of the network's Friday night, youth programming block, it's been a ratings success among the younger set for two seasons. In fact, it appears to be the only show that anyone watches on Friday night.

As any pop-culture nut worth their salt will tell you, witches are nothing new to the tube. *Bewitched*, starring Elizabeth Montgomery as a pretty witch attempting to settle into marriage with a mortal, was a ratings smash throughout much of the 1960s. The spellcasting twitch of Montgomery's nose and the soundtrack's accompanying tinkle were ubiquitous in prime time. (A spin-off featuring her offspring Tabitha was attempted, but failed.)

Yet all the ingredients that made *Bewitched* the popular success that it was were present two decades earlier in the sparkling 1945 film *I Married A Witch*. Recently emigrated French director Rene Clair crafted this enjoyable comedic bauble around the understated allure of white-hot pinup girl Veronica Lake. As a soft-spoken enchantress living down a legacy of familial skullduggery, she keeps life hilariously interesting for her agitated but understanding "mortal" paramour, Frederic March. The story's twist stems from the fact that March is descended from the Salem family that had put Lake to the torch centuries earlier. Co-starring Susan Hayward and Broderick Crawford, it's a bit of filmic fluff with enough heart and depth to make it a worthwhile refreshment 50 years later.

But what of the broom-riding, cat-breeding, child-eating fairy-tale witch you find Scotch-taped to everyone's front door come Halloween? Certainly, *The Wizard of Oz*

The Best of Japanese Anime II

For Mature Audiences Only!

Get Cutting-Edge Anime Action!

Here's our latest collection of the babes, battles and beasts of cutting-edge Japanese Anime! And it can be yours with THE BEST OF JAPANESE ANIME II. It's uncut, uncensored — and only available from Columbia House Video Library!

Preview Your First Video FREE! *WRATH OF THE NINJA* will have you fighting an army of demons! Check it out FREE for 10 days — if you can handle it, it's yours for only $4.95 plus shipping and handling!

Keep the Anime Mayhem coming! Future videos include the killer robots of *PATLABOR: MOBILE POLICE* and the lethal vixens of the *LEGEND OF LENMEAR*! And all of the hyper-action-packed videos in THE BEST OF JAPANESE ANIME II are so wild, you'll know why it's for Mature Viewers Only!

FREE Preview

Order your FREE Preview of the Future of Anime today!

Imported from Japan

Mail This High-Intensity Video Reply Form Today!

☑ **YES!** Send my first video of THE BEST OF JAPANESE ANIME II for a FREE 10-day preview. If I decide to keep the video, I'll pay just $4.95 plus $3.79 shipping and handling and become a subscriber to the series. If I do not choose to keep my introductory video, I will return it within 10 days, owe nothing and be under no further obligation. Otherwise, I'll receive another video every 4 to 6 weeks, and I'll always have 10 days to preview it. I'll keep only the videos I want for just $19.95 to $24.95 plus shipping and handling, and return any others within 10 days. There's no minimum to buy and I can cancel at any time.

Dept. AAU
Q2D/Q2B/Q2C

Mr
Mrs.
Ms

Name (Please Print)

Address Apt.

City State Zip

Phone Number ( ) Age (3#)

Note: All applications are subject to review. Columbia House Video Library reserves the right to request additional information, to reject any application, or to cancel any membership. Canadian residents will be serviced from Toronto, offer may vary. **Applicable tax added to all orders.**

MAIL TO: re-tv Video Library, Dept. AAU, P.O. Box 1112, Terre Haute, IN 47811

Visit us on the web at http://www.columbiahouse.com/vl

re-tv video library COLUMBIA HOUSE

© 1999 The Columbia House Company
The re-tv name and logo are trademarks of The Columbia House Company
All products are trademarks of their respective owners. All rights reserved.

Michelle Pfeiffer, Susan Sarandon and Cher star as a trio of housewives who learn a few tricks from the devil in The Witches of Eastwick. *BELOW: Barbara Steele stars as a witch out for revenge in Mario Bava's atmospheric 1960 film,* Black Sunday.

is the movie most responsible for sculpting the public's image of this stereotypical witch. The film wrangles all the disparate storybook elements accumulated through the ages into one cackling package. Margaret Hamilton as the giggling, green-skinned hag is arguably the most identifiable icon in a film crowded with many. The Brothers Grimm were done proud by her no-holds-barred portrayal, which even the sophisticated kids of today find terrifying. (For the record, I find any of the various members of the Lollipop Guild decidedly more terrifying.) Hamilton's red shoe-coveting harpy is flat-out nasty and about as far removed from Veronica Lake's soft shoulders as imaginable, but even if you're growing (understandably) tired of the classic film, you gotta love her, warts and all.

1958 saw the release of the film that once and for all transformed the hook-nosed, broom-riding crone into the shapely, wily, seductive stereotype that is rapidly becoming cliché. *Bell, Book and Candle*, starring 1950's dream chick Kim Novak, was the true precursor to today's gaggle of feminine spell-casters. Kim's curious coven abides in trendy Greenwich Village, digs the beat scene, and employs an urbanized brand of black magic. Craving normalcy, Novak forsakes her unearthly attributes and sets her sites on addled everyman James Stewart. When practical means fail, she bows to the urgings of her witch and warlock relatives (snickering Jack Lemmon and lovably loopy Elsa Lanchester) and administers a potion. (When Kim Novak has to resort to a bubbling cauldron in order to attract men, what's the world coming to?) As directed by Richard Quine from John Van Druten's Broadway play, the film is middling but for the quietly seductive scenes between Novak and Stewart. It is Novak's resonance as the free-thinking, statuesque witch that is important to this filmic coven's chronology.

Certainly the aforementioned plots are testament to the fact that witches are among us, blending with society in general and in many cases desiring nothing but normalcy and complete acceptance. But doesn't the witch mystique have entirely evil roots? Enough about the stacked, blonde, sex symbols who dabble in the black arts—bring on the bad girls! A good place to start is a silent slice of sin from Sweden, director Benjamin Christiansen's *Witchcraft Through the Ages*. Known in some quarters by its alternate title, *Haxan*, the 1922 film boasts a cult stature that's grown wildly over the decades, with good reason. Christiansen's silent nightmare is brimming with dark, horrific images—witches and their various victims descending to hell, subjected to myriad tortures and punishments—anguished, shadow-laden, cautionary tableaux depicting the wages of sin. All of it is served up in an unrelenting chiaroscuro of palpable sorrow.

The film is roundly hailed as something of a masterpiece while, even its unabashed admirers concede, the imagery may be a trifle over the top. One case in point: As Satan himself bends forward, proffering his bare behind, a brigade of the damned cues up for the opportunity to kiss his derriere. The punchline is that Satan is portrayed by none other than the director in heavy makeup. Imagine the instructions to the puzzled cast that morning!

It was nearly 40 years before another film on the topic was as richly realized as Christiansen's opus. *Black Sunday* (1960) made an international star of Barbara Steele and a cult hero of Italian director Mario Bava. Steele had labored as an actress in England for some time before traveling to Italy to make films. Bava had worked as one of the continent's most respected cinematographers before turning his hand to directing. He subsequently turned out a handful of Europe's very best horror films including *Blood and Black Lace*; *Kill Baby, Kill*; and *Planet of the Vampires*.

Bava never topped *Black Sunday*, however. The film is dripping with atmosphere, filled with shadows on ancient stone, wind-tattered curtains, and judicious use of slow-motion photography culminating in the inescapable sensation that someone is peering over your shoulder. At times, even the often-clumsy dubbing works to the film's advantage, helping to sustain an otherworldly note throughout. But don't let these descriptions of subtlety fool you—it is the film's stomach-turning opening sequence that most fans recall best. Steele, as a 16th-century witch, is about to be burned alive. As though this punishment were deemed insufficient, a mask of iron spikes is hammered into her face as well. (Yes, the audience is shown the result later in the film.) Naturally, the mistreated witch exacts her

revenge, returning from the grave centuries later to inhabit the body of her twin descendent. Although the ensuing movie is rich with gothic imagery, viewers never quite recover from this startling prelude.

Another dark and memorable take on the elements of black magic is a horror gem called *Burn Witch, Burn*, a too-little-seen 1962 film from Britain also known as *Night of the Eagle*. It's a solid and spooky story about a college professor who, to his great astonishment, rises through the scholastic ranks with great speed. Although he may be a college prof., he's too dumb to realize that his wife has been pulling a few supernatural strings on his behalf. That's right, she's a witch. As the naive academic (a believably beleaguered Peter Wyngarde) becomes convinced that he's stuck in a nest of nasties, the coven grad-

A first from award-winning fantasy artist Michael Whelan.

DRAGONFIRE

Sculpture shown actual size of approximately 5½" (13.97 cm) in height.

A spectacular Limited Edition sculpture showcased within a crystal-clear dome.

He rises from the mists like a nightmare. The most mystical creature of the imagination, captured in the *first ever* fine art miniature by fantasy artist Michael Whelan, winner of eleven Hugo Awards and three World Fantasy Awards. Crafted in hand-painted Tesori® porcelain, a blend of powdered porcelain and resins that holds every detail. The sparkling orb brilliantly polished. All resting beneath a crystal-clear dome.

Just $37.50, this hand-numbered Limited Edition will *close forever* after just 95 casting days. Available *exclusively* from The Franklin Mint.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED. If you wish to return any Franklin Mint purchase, you may do so within 30 days of your receipt of that purchase for replacement, credit or refund.

ISSUED IN A WORLDWIDE LIMITED EDITION

A Limited Edition Fine Art Sculpture.
Individually Hand-Numbered and Hand-Painted.

The Franklin Mint
Franklin Center, PA 19091-0001

Please mail by May 31, 1999.

Please enter my order for Dragonfire by Michael Whelan. I need SEND NO MONEY NOW. I will be billed $37.50* when my sculpture is ready to be sent.
Limit: one sculpture per collector.

**Plus my state sales tax and $3.95 for shipping and handling.*

SIGNATURE _____
ALL ORDERS ARE SUBJECT TO ACCEPTANCE

MR/MRS/MISS _____
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ADDRESS _____ APT. # _____

CITY/STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE # (_____) _____

19991-50-001

THE FRANKLIN MINT

Begin Your Quest At Albion...

Swords by
Del Tin
Jim Hrisoulas
Other Fine Makers

Steel and Leather Armor

Hard-to-find Accoutrements

We are committed to bringing you the finest in museum-quality reproductions at the best prices anywhere.
Receive a $20 discount on your first order over $100 when you subscribe to our color catalog. Send $4.00 to the address below or order a catalog by credit card through our toll-free number.
Let us prepare you for your Quest!

ALBION
ARMORERS

11113 Sceptre Ridge Terrace
Germantown, MD 20876
1-888-806-HELM
email: Quest@albionarmorers.com
Visit our website at:
www.albionarmorers.com

Neve Campbell and other Gen-Xers conjure up the devil in 1996's The Craft.

ually tightens the noose in an attempt to drive him nuts. The climax, centering on an immense stone eagle that may or may not be pursuing Wyngarde, is a knockout.

Curiously director Sidney Hayers never turned out another film half as good. (A few fans of British fright films point to Hayer's *Circus of Horror* (1960), but there is no comparison.) Richard Matheson (*The Incredible Shrinking Man*) based his script on A. Merrit's classic story that had been filmed previously as *Weird Woman*, a far different film that was part of Universal's Inner Sanctum series of the 1940s starring Lon Chaney.

Another seamless British spin on the witch mythos arrived in 1960 with the title of *Horror Hotel*, known alternately as *City of the Dead*, an English chronicle of the supernatural with curiously American underpinnings. It details the travails of a student of the black arts who travels to a tiny Massachusetts town with a history of witch persecution. Upon her arrival in the perpetually fogbound hamlet she discovers—you guessed it- -the coven is still going strong. Worse yet, she's a potential virgin sacrifice! It sounds trite but it's not. As lensed by director John Llewelyn Moxey, who helmed the *Night Stalker* TV movies a decade later, it's laudably credible and more than a little spooky. Creepy Christopher Lee in the cast is a bonus.

In a curious turn, one of the most frightening witch films is made so by the excesses of the witch hunter. *The Conqueror Worm* (aka *The Witchfinder General*) features Vincent Price in one his most rounded characterizations. As Mathew Hopkins, a historical figure who set about hunting witches under the auspices of Cromwell, Price is surprisingly restrained as the sadistic witch stalker, administering all manner of tortures to the accused. Ian Ogilvy and Hillary Dwyer are the innocent young lovers who find themselves relentlessly tormented by the Witchfinder.

In the majority of his portrayals it's easy to detect the whimsical lilt in Price's voice, cueing his audience to the fact that it's all make believe. Not this time. Vincent is wholly evil and this proves to be one of the film's two most important attributes. The other is the cultured direction of Michael Reeves. Reeves was something of a phenom who died shortly after the film was completed, aged only 24. Curiously his only other notable film credit was a hasty Italian-Yugoslav production called *The She Beast*, the story of a resurrected, vengeance-minded witch starring—who else—Barbara Steele!

Back on American shores, witches proved to be no strangers to poverty-row cinema. Leave it to Roger Corman to build a low-budget, drive-in classic around medieval witchcraft and hypnotic regression. *The Undead* was a fog-shrouded, no-cost epic using the Bridey Murphy reincarnation craze as a starting point. (A short-lived fad swept the nation after an Arizona housewife, under hypnosis, recalled a past life as an 18th century Irish lass named Bridey Murphy.) In Corman's scenario, Pamela Duncan plays a prostitute similarly regressed to the Dark Ages. The film is populated with black cats, dwarfs, and Satan himself. But all of these curiosities pale beside shapely Allison Hayes. Hayes was an underused and underrated B-movie actress best known as the 50-foot woman. Sharp-featured and imposing, she redeemed any number of grade Z pics just by walking on the set. Here she's a slatternly, statuesque witch in a bodice that's two sizes too small, wily, conniving, and charming in the worst sense of the word.

These films detailing the darker side of the witch mythos inevitably feature Satan on some subordinate level. Whether he's portrayed as a guy next door with a devious streak, or with the *de rigeur* pitchfork, goatee and horns, his power for promulgating witchcraft is undeniable. When the witches

of cinema lay dormant for a decade or so, it was Lucifer in the form of Hollywood bad boy Jack Nicholson who helped return them to prominence.

It could be argued that *The Witches of Eastwick*, a critical and popular success of 1987, kicked off the modern, cinematic witch trend that continues today. That same year saw the release of a coattail-riding, ultra-low-budget thriller simply called *Witchcraft*. Never heard of it? It's spawned five sequels! In addition, films called *Witchboard*, *Witchfire*, and *Witchtrap* all came out around the same time—proof that witches have encroached upon the direct-to-video market as well!

Eastwick, a funny enough film with little in the way of artistic pretension, banks largely on star power for its appeal. Nicholson as the Devil is a natural, of course. As the frustrated trio of housewives who come under his sway, Susan Sarandon is savvy and understated, Michelle Pfeiffer is refreshingly innocent, and Cher is—Cher. Based on a novel by John Updike, the film is oddly raunchy and decidedly unsubtle. As directed by George Miller of *Mad Max* fame, *Eastwick* is fun, but its excesses—not the least of which concerns Nicholson's shameless hamming—prevent it from ever being charming. Of course, that never stopped a movie from starting a trend.

The film that clinched the witch's solid commercial standing, erasing any doubt that distaff deviltry is boffo box office, was a 1996 sleeper called *The Craft*. Starring Gen X poster girls Fairuza Balk and Neve Campbell, it's all about a quartet of prep school witches from well-to-do families. Delivered with a wink and peppered with enough pop songs to drive anyone over 40 completely bananas, the film surprised audiences—and significantly, critics—with how savvy it was. Although undermined by a dopey, overwrought climax, many found it a satisfying mix of horror and teen angst, its box office take probably surprising even its producers.

Jack Nicholson (actually a puppet of the actor for this scene) is the devil in The Witches of Eastwick.

The witch's presence in the fabric of commercial media is cyclical; there's really nothing new going on here. For instance, it's easy to imagine a WW II-era film featuring Veronica Lake, Linda Darnell, Paulette Goddard, and Anne Rutherford as wedgy-wearing, gum-snapping, wise-cracking witches. Today, they wear fishnet stockings and too much makeup but the spell is the same—they're dangerous dames. The females in the audience long to share in the control the witch can exert over her circumstances—particularly relationships, while the men fantasize about being swept under the spell of an aggressive woman, mentally extrapolating on the supernatural enhancements of the witch's lovemaking prowess. (One could get very Freudian about the whole phenomenon without ever arriving at a satisfying explanation.) They were one of civilization's first and most expedient scapegoats who, through the miracle of motion pictures, have been transformed into powerful fantasy icons we either long to be or be with.

Might as well accept them. You obviously can't kill them. And some of them are kinda cute. ❧

Marty Baumann is the award-winning editor/designer of The Astounding B Monster, http://www.bmonster.com

In the mood for something strange?

Stay awake. Stay alive

INSOMNIACS

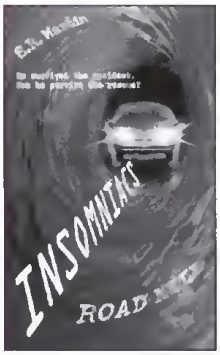
by S.R. Martin

They are everywhere.

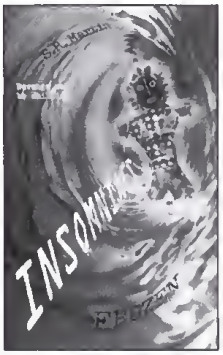
WATCHERS

by Peter Lerangis

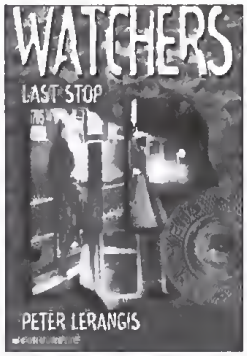
New Series!



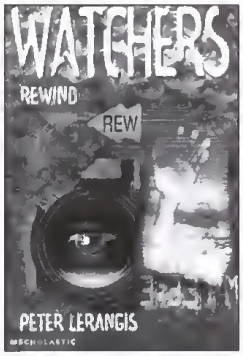
Road Kill



Frozen



Last Stop



Rewind

SCHOLASTIC **At Bookstores now.**

BY HEINZ INSU FENKL

Shimchong, the blindman's daughter, gives the West a sample of Korean Folklore.

WHEN I WAS GROWING UP IN KOREA IN THE '60S, I HAD AN UNCLE WHO WAS A terrible man, but a wonderful storyteller, and so I heard more than my share of instructive and cautionary folk tales. He told most of these stories as personal anecdotes or claimed they were things that had happened to near or distant relatives. Growing up in a culture that remains, to this day, the most conservative of the Asian cultures influenced by the teachings of Confucius, I had to deal with plenty of idealized role models in those stories, mostly famous intellectual poets, monks, and generals (in that order). They set a high standard for proper behavior, even as their stories were told by a less than exemplary man. Sometimes even casual references and asides that went along with these tales had a lasting impact on me. Once, after my uncle had told me that it was undignified for a gentleman scholar to run, I got soaked on a dignified walk home during the monsoon. He laughed at me when I caught a cold. When he said that a famous calligrapher practiced until he could form the characters perfectly in the dark, I spent hours perfecting my cursive in the film-loading booth of a U.S. Army photo lab.

"The Blindman's Daughter" by H. Insue Fenkl

My younger sister, who heard stories from female relatives, had a much harder time of it. For her, the role models were always young women who had sacrificed themselves for the good of their families or husbands. Whereas the stories I heard were usually about men who had succeeded, typically with the help of a clever wife or a devoted mother (giving advice, enduring awful privations), the women in the stories my sister heard were precisely those figures who endured all of the hardships themselves. When we lived in America, I sensed that the phrase "Would you jump off a cliff if he told you to?" was meant to be sarcastic and critical, but when my mother used to tell my younger sister, "He's your older brother. If he tells you to jump off a cliff, you obey him!" the sense I got was that this was some sort of law I could invoke at will, and that my sister should consider herself lucky that I was nice enough not to do so (though I was sorely tempted at times).

Korea, as they say, is "the shrimp caught between whales," the whales referring historically to China and Japan. For nearly all of its 5,000-year history, the shrimp-shaped peninsula has been the prize of domestic or international conflict. Excepting a brief golden age when the nation was unified under a sort of renaissance king named Sejong (credited, in the late 1400s, with developing the most elegant phonetic alphabet in the world), the peninsula was colonized repeatedly by China, the Mongols, and Japan. After liberation from the second Japanese occupation in 1945, the peninsula was split in half, overseen by the Soviet Union in the North and by the U.N. in the South. The Korean War of 1950-53 devastated an already depleted physical and cultural landscape. In the '60s, when I grew up there, the hills were still sparsely vegetated. Trees had not yet grown back to full height after all the artillery bombardments that followed the deforestation by the Japanese during World War II.

You can imagine the psychological consequences these

Only NRI gives you all the tools you need to get published and earn good money as a writer

With 11,000 magazines in print and tens of thousands of new books published every year, money-making opportunities for writers are better than ever.

Now, with NRI, you can learn how to write what sells. Mastering the basics of good writing, marketing your work for publication, even setting up shop as a freelance writer — it's all covered in NRI's comprehensive at-home course.

Indeed, no other school gives you as much practical instruction or trains you as thoroughly in the professional techniques used by today's top writers.

Get one-on-one, professional guidance

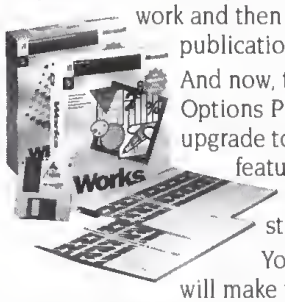
The moment you enroll, you can count on your NRI writer-instructors to offer you the advice and support you need to become the successful, published writer you want to be.

Through personal letters and in the margins of work you submit, you'll get specific, thoughtful recommendations on improving your technique. Word for word, line for line, your instructors take time to help you master the basics of good writing, then dare you to take risks and encourage you to push the limits of your creativity.

You'll master every aspect of your craft, from developing and communicating an idea to finding the right market for your work. Soon, you'll be doing the kind of clean, clear, strong writing today's publishers pay well for — and readers love to read.

Train with and keep a powerful, full-featured computer system — today's best-loved writing tool!

Unlike any other school, NRI shows you how to sharpen your writing skills and add to your income with the powerful 200 MHz Pentium-class multimedia PC system included in your course. This system arrives at your doorstep fully loaded with Windows 98 and features a Super VGA color monitor, 2.8 gigabyte hard drive, 16 megabytes of RAM, 33,600 baud fax/modem, Microsoft Works integrated software, and more. Only NRI gives you practical instruction with this invaluable tool, teaching you to use it the way the pros do: to develop your most creative work and then perfect it for publication.



And now, through NRI's PC Options Plan, you can upgrade to an even more feature-packed system at special student prices!

Your computer will make the process of writing easier by eliminating tedious, time-stealing tasks. And it can even help you communicate with clients and publishers, schedule appointments and deadlines, maintain financial records, conduct research online, and much more.

Send today for your FREE catalog

Find out all the details about NRI's innovative at-home writing courses by sending today for our free, full-color catalog.

Just fill out and mail the coupon below, or write to us at the NRI Schools, 4401 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20008. Or...

CALL 1-800-321-4634 Ext. 3652

www.nrischools.com

SEND TODAY FOR YOUR FREE CATALOG!

NRI School of Writing
4401 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008

☑ **Check one FREE catalog only**
❑ Fiction Writing ❑ Nonfiction Writing

Name _____ Age _____
(please print)

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Accredited Member Distance Education and Training Council

A Division of The McGraw Hill Companies

3255-0399

WRITING AD#89

What Ho, Magic!

Tanya Huff, the acclaimed writer of the Blood and the Kigh series, is also a fantastic short story writer. *What Ho, Magic!* is a collection of fifteen short stories by Tanya. Included in this collection are the three earlier short stories of Vicky, Michael, and Henry from her Blood series and a brand new never before published novella of Vicky and Michael.

"This is fantasy at its finest."—*Rave Reviews*

"Well done, with truly likable and interesting characters..."—*Locus*

ISBN: 1-892065-04-5 Price: $16.00
Soft Cover Trade 408 pages

"Tanya Huff delivers great action and the perfect mix of reality and mystery."—*Sense of Wonder*

"Huff's adventure is great frun to read."—*Publishers Weekly*

Meisha Merlin Publishing

http://www.angelfire.com/biz/MeishaMerlin

Del Tin swords from Italy are NOW AVAILABLE!

Vaciacraft swords made in the Philippines are NOW AVAILABLE!

See them on our website:
www.fantasy cutlery.com

Made from high carbon steel blades that are 5/16" thick!
Dealer Inquiries are Welcome.

Place your order soon or send $3.00 for catalog to:

Fantasy Cutlery East

40 Casey Jones, Suite 5, Jackson, TN 38305 • 901-664-5774
New E-mail address: fantasy@hubcitynet.com

conquests had on a male-dominated culture based on conservative Confucian doctrine that elevated the status of men and denigrated that of women. During the especially oppressive periods, the women of Korea carried much of the burden of maintaining the internal structure of households, seeing after the basic needs of families whose men were often conscripted, imprisoned, or killed by the colonizers.

It is no wonder, then, that Korean folklore is full of stories that praise and encourage virtue in women, especially young women. The most prominent of these female virtue stories directed at young girls is the story of Shimchong, the blind man's daughter. This pseudo-historical tale has the same prominence as the stories of Cinderella and Snow White in the West, and in the same way that those stories have been popularized in Disney books, the story of Shimchong has been one of the favorite subjects of Korean children's books in recent years.

One thing that distinguishes the tale of Shimchong is that it also happens to be one of the most popular narratives used by Korean shamans; there are many renditions of the tale designed specifically to accompany rituals for the healing and prevention of blindness. In that sense, since it is invoked in both sacred and profane contexts, "Shimchong" is more like a biblical tale than a fairy tale. In fact, if you consider the spectrum of religious traditions in Korea—which includes Buddhism, animism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Christianity in addition to the shamanic tradition—the story of Shimchong has a truly unique appeal because it resonates with motifs from all of them in an unusually diplomatic way. The story succeeds in conveying its message of female virtue while simultaneously appealing to (or at least being acceptable to) each of the major religious traditions.

The following version of the tale is one I've compiled from regional variants in the same way the brothers Grimm constructed "ideal" versions of stories based on several different tellings.

Shimchong, the Blindman's Daughter

In the last years of the Hongpung era of Sung, in Tohwadong in Hwangju, there lived a poor blind yangban by the name of Shim Hakkyu. He and his devoted wife, Kwakssi, were childless for the longest time, and it was only after many years of faithful prayer to the spirits that Kwakssi bore a beautiful daughter whom they named Shimchong. But, alas, the ordeal of giving birth at such an advanced age was too much for Kwakssi, and she passed away. Shim did his best to raise his daughter alone and together the two of them endured great hardships.

Shimchong was an obedient and filial daughter who accompanied her father as soon as she could walk and begged alms with him the moment she could speak. Not many years passed before she was a beauti-

ful young girl. One day, Old Man Shim was out alone begging for alms and he stumbled into a deep irrigation ditch. As he was foundering in the water, trying vainly to climb out, bemoaning his bad fate and his handicap, he heard a voice speak to him from above. "Old man," it said, "I have heard you lamenting about your blindness. If you will give three hundred bushels of rice to my temple as a tribute to the Lord Buddha, we will offer up our prayers to return your sight." Gentle but firm hands that seemed to reach down from the heavens themselves took hold of Old Man Shim's trembling arms and pulled him from the waters of the ditch. Shim was so thankful and so full of hope that he momentarily forgot his dire circumstances, and without thinking he blurted out, "Thank you kind monk. Thank you! I will give you those three hundred bags of rice! I swear it!"

It wasn't until much later, when his elation had worn off, that Old Man Shim had the terrible realization that he did not have the means to offer three bowls of rice—let alone three hundred bushels—to the temple.

"Shimchong-ah," he said to his daughter that evening, recounting his misfortune. "What shall I do? I was filled with gladness and the world seemed bright to me. Other men jostle me out of the way or steal my alms from out of my hands but the monk was kind. All I wanted was to return his kindness, and look what I have done. What terrible thing will befall us if I have offended the Buddha himself?"

That night she lay on her thin bed mat unable to sleep, worrying about her father's promise to the monk She could think of no way to raise the three hundred bushels of rice as tribute to the temple, no matter how much she pondered it, and by and by she drifted off into a restless sleep.

In her dreams, her mother appeared and told her how she might get the rice for her father. "Go to the harbor," she said. "There you will find a merchant looking for a young maiden. Go with him and he will provide the three hundred bushels of rice."

It just so happened that the Dragon King of the East Sea was displeased with the merchant fleet and had sent foul weather and storms that had sunk ship after ship on its way to China. To appease the Dragon King, the merchants needed to sacrifice a beautiful maiden, but as of yet they had found no family willing to sell a maiden daughter. So when Shimchong appeared the next dawn and offered herself in exchange for the tribute for her father, the captain of the merchant fleet was more than happy to accept.

The three hundred bushels of rice were taken to the temple and the prayers to the compassionate Buddha were offered up as agreed, but Old Man Shim did not immediately regain his sight as he had hoped. The monks said that it would not simply happen overnight. Now Old Man Shim was not only poor and blind, but had lost his only daughter.

ELFQUEST®

THE ELFQUEST READER'S COLLECTION:
FIRE & FLIGHT
THE FORBIDDEN GROVE
CAPTIVES OF BLUE MOUNTAIN
QUEST'S END
SIEGE AT BLUE MOUNTAIN
THE SECRET OF TWO-EDGE
THE CRY FROM BEYOND
KINGS OF THE BROKEN WHEEL
DREAMTIME
WOLFRIDER!
SHARDS
LEGACY
HUNTRESS
ASCENT
REUNION
THE BIG ELFQUEST GATHERUM
WOLFRIDER'S GUIDE
...AND MORE!

FOR OVER 20 YEARS, THE *ELFQUEST* STORY HAS BEEN WOVEN IN COMICS, GRAPHIC NOVELS, SONG, PROSE AND ART. JOIN US!

FOR A COPY OF OUR CATALOG, OR TO ORDER CALL *TOLL-FREE 877-WOLFRIDER* (877-965-3743)
(ALL OTHER INQUIRIES, 914-473-9277)

DON'T FORGET TO VISIT THE WOLFRIDER SHOP ONLINE AT *WWW.ELFQUEST.COM*

WOLFRIDER BOOKS

Clarion
The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers' Workshop

June 13 - July 24, 1999

Writers-in-Residence:
Karen Joy Fowler James Morrow Tim Powers
Mike Resnick Michaela Roessner Judith Tarr

Editor-in-Residence:
Scott Edelman

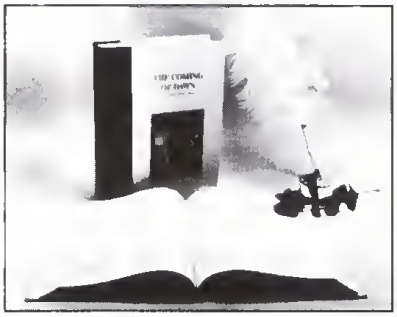
Deadline for receipt of Application: April 1, 1999

For more information contact with SASE:
Clarion 1999 c/o Mary Sheridan
Lyman Briggs School Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48825-1107

DreamHaven
912 W. Lake St. Mpls. MN 55408
Science Fiction, Horror, Fantasy, Media, Art
Free Monthly Catalog
1-800-379-0657
www.visi.com/~dreamhvn/

New Poetry Contest $48,000.00 in Prizes

The International Library of Poetry to award 250 total prizes to amateur poets in coming months



The International Library of Poetry publishes the work of amateur poets in colorful hardbound anthologies like ***The Coming of Dawn****, pictured above. Each volume features poetry by a diverse mix of poets from all over the world*

Owings Mills, Maryland – The International Library of Poetry has just announced that $48,000.00 in prizes will be awarded over the next 12 months in the brand new North American Open Amateur Poetry Contest. The contest is open to everyone and entry is free.

"We're especially looking for poems from new or unpublished poets," indicated Howard Ely, spokesperson for The International Library of Poetry. "We have a ten year history of awarding large prizes to talented poets who have never before won any type of writing competition."

How To Enter

Anyone may enter the competition simply by sending in ***ONLY ONE*** original poem, any subject, any style, to:

The International Library of Poetry
Suite 17517
1 Poetry Plaza
Owings Mills, MD 21117-6282
Or enter online at **www.poetry.com**

The poem should be no more than 20 lines, and the poet's name and address must appear on the top of the page. "All poets who enter will receive a response concerning their artistry, usually within seven weeks," indicated Mr. Ely.

Possible Publication

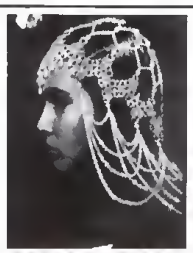
Many submitted poems will also be considered for inclusion in one of The International Library of Poetry's forthcoming hardbound anthologies. Previous anthologies published by the organization have included *On the Threshold of a Dream*, *Days of Future's Past*, *Of Diamonds and Rust*, and *Moments More to Go*, among others.

"Our anthologies routinely sell out because they are truly enjoyable reading, and they are also a sought-after sourcebook for poetic talent," added Mr. Ely.

World's Largest Poetry Organization

Having awarded over $150,000.00 in prizes to poets worldwide in recent years, The International Library of Poetry, founded in 1982 to promote the artistic accomplishments of contemporary poets, is the largest organization of its kind in the world. Anthologies published by the organization have featured poems by more than 100,000 poets.

© 1997 The International Library of Poetry


ELEANORE D'AQUITAINE $60

RHIANNA $200

HANDFLOWER $20

HEMLETTE BELT $70

HALTER OR 3 ROW BELT
$80-each
$200 set

302 STAINLESS COIF $400

BLACK PRINCE ARMORY
CHAINMAIL, ARMORY & JEWELRY
Manny Lieberman, Owner/Artist
5 Abode Rd., New Lebanon, NY 12125-2601
(518) 794-7831
Wholesale & Retail · Credit Cards Welcome
Visit our website at www.badattitude.com

The sea was calm at the beginning of the voyage, but soon the sky grew gray and ominous. The water, at first, was only choppy, but then the sea boiled as if the Dragon King were thrashing his massive body beneath the waves. Lightning flashed from the dark clouds and the wind ripped at the sails. Oars and anchor chains snapped in the violent sea.

The merchant captain brought Shimchong out of the hold, dressed up in bright-colored bridal finery. Although Shimchong told him that she would leap into the waves of her own will, he did not believe her, and he had her hands and feet securely bound. With the sailors all weeping copiously with their admiration for her bravery and her filial virtue, Shimchong said a quiet prayer and leapt overboard into the ocean. And just as she disappeared under the waves, the violent seas grew calm once again.

Shimchong descended into the cold water. As she sank deeper and deeper, the water around her was suddenly bright with light and she found that she could breathe. She looked around in wonder as the minions of the Dragon King approached her, released her from her bonds, and escorted her to the magnificent underwater palace.

And there she dwelled, happy, for it is said that the spirit of her mother also dwelt there. But after a time she was homesick for the world of the surface, and she longed to see her dear father again. Her cheerful demeanor grew sad, and it came to the notice of the Dragon King, who called her to him one day and said, "I cannot bear to see your unhappiness any longer, Shimchong. I have seen that your filial piety and your selfless devotion are far greater than that of any other mortal I have known. It touches my heart to see your concern for your poor father, so as a reward for your devotion, I will send you back up into the world above." And with this the Dragon King transformed Shimchong into a lotus flower.

So it happened that a giant white lotus blossom was found at the mouth of a river along the coast, and the local fisherman, awed by its beauty, decided to make it a gift for their King. The King was recently widowed, and known to be in a deeply mournful mood. They hoped the bright flower would lift his spirits.

When the King first beheld the flower, his eyes lit up in wonder. He rewarded the fishermen handsomely and had the lotus installed in its own special room where he would stand for hours each day in a melancholy mood, admiring its beauty. Each night Shimchong would emerge from the blossom, and at the crack of each dawn she would merge into it again. Time and seasons passed and the King's love for the flower did not wane.

One moonlit night the King was restless, and as he wandered the palace he found himself, by and by, at the chamber of the lotus flower. He stepped inside to gaze upon the lotus in the moonlight, but what he saw

Walter Crane, illustration for Beauty and the Beast, *1874. BELOW: A Korean folk painting entitled* Dragon Queen *(c. 1900).*

was far more wonderful—a woman so beautiful it took his breath away. "Who are you?" he asked. "Are you a ghost come to bewitch me or are you real?"

"It is only I," said Shimchong. "It is I who live in the giant flower." Out of modesty, she tried to hide herself, but when she turned, she found the lotus flower had vanished.

And this is how Shimchong came to be the King's bride. There was a magnificent wedding, and they passed their days together in great happiness, but the King sensed a great sadness about his new Queen. One day he found her weeping in the garden. "My dear wife," he said, "I cannot bear to see your tears. Tell me your wish—any wish—and it shall be granted."

"There is only one thing I desire," Shimchong replied. "Let there be a great public banquet to celebrate our marriage, and let all the blind men of the Kingdom be invited to partake of the feast. That is what will make my heart glad."

The King honored his Queen's strange request, and so from far and wide, from all corners of the kingdom, the blind beggar men were invited to a banquet to celebrate the wedding. For three days they came to drink and to dine on the fine foods, and each day the new Queen watched from behind her gauzy silk curtains, hoping that the next blind man might be her father. But it was to no avail.

On the last day, as the gates were closing and the Queen had turned forlornly away, a commotion was heard outside. The servants were turning away a blind beggar who had arrived too late. And just as the gates were closing, the Queen happened to glance backward to see that under the dirt and dust of his long journey and under the tatters of his rags, the old man was none other than her father. "Father!" she cried. "Father! It is my dear father! Let him in!"

Old Man Shim staggered inside, nearly losing his balance from the shock of hearing the familiar voice. "Aigo! Shimchong-ah!" he called. "Is it a ghost or have the dead come to life? My daughter! Is that your voice I hear? Let's have a look at you, girl!"

Once again, in his enthusiasm, Old Man Shim forgot his circumstances. He opened his eyes wide, oblivious to his own blindness, and when he did so he found that he could suddenly see. Before him was his daughter, more beautiful than he could have imagined. Shim wept with joy and embraced her, and she, too, was tearful with joy. Soon there was a happy commotion throughout the palace, and it is said that every blind man there who wanted to look at Shimchong, the filial daughter, had his vision restored that day.

IN THE SHAMANIC CEREMONIES THAT USE the Shimchong narrative, the "patient" is supposed to be healed precisely at the climax of the story when Old Man Shim opens his eyes and sees his long-lost daughter. Shimchong is especially dear to Korean shamans because most are women, and they trace their own mythic lineage back to a folk tale about a disowned princess named Pari who, like Shimchong, becomes her father's savior (the story of Princess Pari is a variant of one generally known in the West as "The Armless Maiden").

At first glance, "Shimchong" may seem to be critical of Buddhism, since Old Man Shim gets himself into trouble through his unwitting promise and because the promised healing doesn't seem to take place according to the Buddhist terms. But then, the monk never said exactly when Shim would regain his sight, and it is possible to attribute the healing to the Buddhist prayers at the end. By the same token, you could initially be critical of the Dragon King (a Taoist/animist figure) because he requires Shimchong as a sacrifice, but then he is generous to the point of not only saving her life but sending her back to the world of mortals. Shimchong's departed mother (a shamanic/Confucian motif), who comes to her in the dream, could be criticized for advising her daughter to offer up her life for her father's sake, but then we could argue that, being in the other world, she knew the ultimate outcome of that advice. Finally—though the tale is generally about the initial destruction and then subsequent reconstruction of the family unit—the behavior of the characters, even if they are in a non-Christian context, does, in fact, resonate with Christian ideals. After all, what the story rewards is self-sacrifice and love.

Many of the motifs in "Shimchong" will be oddly familiar. The sacrifice of a maiden for the safe passage of the merchant ship is reminiscent of the story of Agamemnon's daughter, Iphigenia, sacrificed to Artemis for safe passage of the Greek fleet to the Trojan War. The closing of the story at the wedding banquet is also reminiscent of "Salt and Water," a European tale that is one of the subtexts for Shakespeare's King Lear (although it is hardly as dark as the play).

My sister never did have to jump off a cliff to prove her virtue, although my mother did once tell her the story of "Butterfly Rock," a riverside cliff where a group of Korean maidens is said to have leapt to their deaths rather than lose their virtue to the evil Mongols. (Their colorful skirts fluttering in the wind are said to have looked like butterflies from a distance.) When we moved to the United States, my sister was quickly inundated with other role models, and as she grew older my mother's chastising comparisons to Shimchong lost their early rhetorical power.

But recently, with a three-year-old daughter of her own, my sister found herself watching the Disney version of "Beauty and the Beast." She already knew the story, of course, from the version by Madame de Villeneuve in Andrew Lang's Blue Fairy Book, but she told me that it wasn't until she saw the film that the parallels struck her. Since I am one of the few American experts of Korean folk tales, she asked me if her hunch was right—that "Beauty and the Beast" was somehow the same story as "Shimchong." My sister's hunch was probably triggered by

Continued on page 73

JORDAN'S WATERH

This story might feel like science fiction, but its heart—the power of myth, language, and love to transform—is pure fantasy.

The gaffer tripped. He fell into Jordan's blade and was cut in half along with the ore pile. Perhaps it was confusion. The boy may have had his hearing. Confusion in the mine was common among the young men who could hear the crash of shovels against rock, the impact of turbo-pressured water against stone, and the roar of the loader engines. Jordan felt the slight hesitation as his machine sliced through the soft human body on its way to the heavy pile of ore. A less experienced man may never have noticed the barely perceptible difference between the hydraulic shovel's passage through air and its passage through human flesh and bone.

Jordan typed a command on his console. He marked the ore load "dirty." The ore would have to be washed clean of blood and bone before it reached the refinery. He ordered another gaffer.

He received an acknowledgment for the ore load but the tone sounded before his gaffer order was processed. He made a mental note to reorder a gaffer in the morning. At least the dirty load wouldn't be charged against him.

The lights in his cab went dark. His control sticks grew sluggish then immobile in his hands as the hydraulics of the huge mining machine wound down. Steel bolts retracted with a jolt and the unlocked cab door swung open a crack. He could smell the air fill his cab. The atmosphere in the mine was damp and full of dust. The filters in the loader kept the air clean for him to breathe. But every time the cab door opened at the end of the day he could smell the sweat of the men amid the rock dust and steam. It reminded him of his boyhood.

HAMMER

Jordan unlatched the control connector and pulled it from his neck. He switched his connector from "cable" to "radio" control. Then he stepped from the cab into the dimly lit mine. He got in line with the other men and moved down the tunnel toward the elevators to the dormitories. The last load of ore lay still in his shovel. He saw the gaffer's hand poking out of it as he passed the front of his machine.

As they walked they passed through larger and larger tunnels until they arrived in the main gallery where hundreds of miners stood in single-file lines waiting to board the elevators to the dormitories.

He joined the sea of white helmets and blue overalls and kept his eye on the number "6" lit above the elevator door to his home. Jordan felt a tingling on his neck as his audio monitor sprang to life. His ears had been damaged long before by the continuous din of the mines. Time as a gaffer and waterhammer had left him deaf. He heard the control voice from within his brain. The signal came through the contact on his neck and was relayed to the probes that had been embedded in his brain when he was sent to the mines.

"Loader J-for-Jordan group A, six hundred tons on a team three. One neutralized load credited at half rate," said the voice. The tingling stopped. Control had deducted for the dirty load but they hadn't yet processed the gaffer request. He would have to take the deduction for that on tomorrow's work. He wondered if he had enough credit for a few hours in the sunroom.

A man in line for elevator 2 fell to his knees as the other men stepped away from him. They created a zone of emptiness between him and the community. Jordan felt the tingling again in his neck.

"Step away from Loader S-for-Solomon group K," said the control voice. Jordan took a small step away from the man who solemnly raised his hand.

A man in white overalls and a

BY JOE MASTROIANNI

Illustration by John Berkey

blue helmet approached Solomon. Jordan felt the tingling in his neck and heard the controller say, "Loader Solomon is in violation of quota as required by ordinance 62.1.3."

Jordan didn't bother to watch. It happened at the end of every work period. There was something about termination that made him feel unwell. He imagined the maintenance man pressing the particle gun to Solomon's temple. There would be no struggle as Solomon dropped dead to the floor. The tingling in Jordan's neck stopped. Out of the corner of his eye he saw the maintenance vehicle pick up the body for disposal.

The doors to elevator 6 slid open and 31 men stepped into the car. When they were in, the doors slid shut. Jordan walked two steps forward and stopped. He felt someone press two fingers into the small of his back. The sensation was brief but unmistakable.

He kept his eyes fixed ahead. He recognized the sign, the silent language of the deaf, the language of men. It was the sign for, "I understand."

Jordan let his arms hang at his side. He made a fist with his left hand and held out two fingers in acknowledgment. He wondered what understanding Waterhammer had come to.

Jordan walked along the catwalk until he came to Thomas's sleeping chamber. Without looking, he forced himself into the upright sarcophagus. Thomas was already inside the chamber barely big enough for one. Thomas exhaled. The door swung shut and compressed Jordan's naked body against the other man's.

In total darkness the two men stood compressed chest to chest. Jordan could feel Thomas's ribs smashing painfully against his. He could feel the vibration of his heartbeat. The two men interlaced their legs and their arms. They stood compressed cheek to cheek as the sarcophagus sealed the last inch shut. Thomas strained his neck to touch Jordan's. Jordan could feel Thomas's breath against his face. With all the strength he could muster, Jordan pushed his head past Thomas's. The control connectors on their necks touched.

The compartment rotated to the horizontal as the door bolts slammed into place, locking them in. Carefully, they synchronized their breathing. Jordan exhaled while the other man inhaled.

"Your body is getting large, Loader Jordan." Thomas's voice appeared in his head as the voice of control had for years. "I killed Timer Matthew simply by growing too much for my lessons. I'm afraid you will do the same to me."

"If you can finish the lessons soon you won't have to worry about that. You'll live happily to full termination age."

Thomas exhaled as Jordan took a breath.

"Don't breathe so heavily. The monitor will register abnormally high oxygen consumption and control will think I'm sick."

"OK," said Jordan. He tried to calm himself. He was eager to get to the lesson.

Thomas said, "Let's begin then." The words floated in Jordan's mind. "In the beginning was the word, and from the word came the change."

Jordan repeated what Thomas said. He visualized the words and imagined them appearing in Thomas's mind much as Thomas's words appeared voiceless inside his own head.

"Have you found someone to pass the book to?" asked Thomas.

"Yes," Jordan replied.

"That's good. Very good. Does he have caring?"

"I think so," said Jordan.

"And how could you tell?"

Jordan hesitated. "He's from farm 52 Iowa. He's the first one I've ever met."

"Good," said Thomas. "They are very smart in 52 Iowa. I wish I had been bred there. Did I tell you I was from 7 Illinois? That's very close to Iowa."

"Yes, you have," said Jordan. He continued, "The 52 Iowa is my waterhammer. I terminated a gaffer two months ago. The waterhammer used his equipment to try to extract the gaffer from the load. He couldn't succeed, and he did not. I asked him why he tried. He said he felt very comfortable with that gaffer. He never feared for the safe function of his machine or an error with the gaffer around. He said he was afraid the new gaffer wouldn't supply him so much comfort."

"If he has caring," said Thomas, "the book will be safe. Otherwise, we will wait many times the length of our lives for this chance to come again. Such is the way. Love will save the men."

"I still don't understand love, Driver Thomas."

"None of us do. Not one of us ever has."

"How do we know it exists?"

Driver Thomas took a deep breath forcing Jordan to exhale, then wince against the pain of Thomas' ribs crushing against his.

Thomas said, "We have only the word of Timer Andrew who visited the surface for a short time and brought the book into the world."

"Maybe Timer Andrew was defective. Maybe he misunderstood what he saw on the surface."

"Timer Matthew told me that Andrew was very smart. He said that Andrew was able to refine the ore to purity at volumes never achieved before. He is the only man who has been allowed to live beyond his termination date."

"Did he know love? Did Timer Matthew?"

Thomas said, "Timer Matthew never completely understood the word. Like most of us, he believed the book held simple commands but he couldn't understand them. He read the book many times but there were so many unknown words. All he could do was to give the book to me and pass the knowledge of Timer Andrew."

"Love will save all men," Jordan said the command without feeling. "What good is it? What good is it if we don't know what it means? We have our lives. We work and are terminated. What else is there? Why do we need to be saved? What does it mean to be saved?"

"Timer Andrew saw many things on the surface. He saw many men with functions he didn't understand. He wondered if the purpose of men was wrong. Perhaps the purpose should be changed. This is what he meant when he said we should be saved."

Jordan swallowed and waited for his time to breathe. "Driver Thomas," he said, "how can the purpose of men be wrong? Men live to mine the ore. We work well and are promoted to new functions. Each function is more challenging and exciting than the one before. When we do very well we have the sunroom. We have our lives and our rewards. Why isn't that enough?"

Thomas lay silently, catching his breath, timing his breathing with Jordan's. Thomas said, "I don't know, Loader Jordan. To me, there seems perfection in our system. I remember my training at 7 Illinois breeding farm. I was excited to come down to the world to become a gaffer. When I was a young gaffer, I dreamed of operating the hammer. From the hammer to the loader, from the loader to the transport train. Now as a transport driver I want nothing more than to attain the timer position. How I want to schedule the ore arrival at the plant, to plan the flow through the refinery. Many times I've thought to myself, 'All I desire is to perform the timer function for one work period before I'm terminated.' I have only four hundred work periods left."

"The job of a driver is not dangerous. You are not expected to die—not like the poor gaffers. Surely you'll last to be promoted before long."

"But the word," said Thomas. "The word of Timer Andrew and the book he brought into the world make me feel ill. I feel strange in my thinking as if I'm diseased. I believe the word of Timer Andrew is right. I feel my belief in him as I feel my desire to become a timer. I know I must follow his instructions but I can't understand them."

Jordan could feel the need for air press against his abdomen. He tried to take a deep breath but succeeded only in hurting Thomas. He could feel the muscles in Thomas's neck tighten as he strained to breathe.

"Another millimeter in the chest, Loader Jordan, and I'll suffocate for sure. I'm not as strong as you are."

"I will try to breathe calmly," said Jordan.

"Here is the lesson for today," Thomas said. "This is something Timer Matthew told me when I was a loader. Timer Andrew said that on the surface men are not bred on farms. Men are bred from each other. Their love creates men."

Jordan breathed deeply again and Thomas strained to hold air in his lungs as Jordan compressed him hard.

"Loader Jordan, please!" Thomas said in pain.

"Those words make no sense at all."

Thomas waited for the pain to subside before he spoke again. "Timer Andrew said that all men on the surface were different from the men in the world. Each man's body has a different shape. Their skin is not smooth like ours. They have something like clothing growing from their bodies as we grow arms and legs. It's like the strands from torn work clothes. He said that some had an additional limb with which they could produce love. Other's had no additional limb but had a body shape different from both the men with the limb and the men like us in the world. When these two types of surface men touched, they could produce love. This love produces other surface men."

Loader Jordan lay still imagining the grotesque shapes assumed by the surface men.

"I don't expect you to understand it, Jordan. Timer Andrew said we need only keep the word alive and the day will come when a man will understand. He will teach the others."

Suddenly Jordan's memory brightened. He felt the poke in his back. "My waterhammer...," he started, but there was a strong vibration as the sleeping chamber rotated vertical and bolts on the cover to the coffin slammed open. The sleep period had ended.

"The word lives in me," Thomas said quickly.

"The word lives in me," Jordan repeated. The coffin door swung open and Jordan dashed into the flow of men as they moved down the catwalk to the dressing area. Jordan joined them in dim yellow light. No one noticed when Driver Thomas emerged from the same sleep chamber only seconds later.

The waterhammer found a rich vein of ore and Jordan was happy. He was sure to double his tonnage for the day. His time in the sunroom would be increased tenfold. There would be no reward for the waterhammer or young gaffer. They could only hope to be promoted to loader someday. Then they would receive a name and the privilege of reward for tonnage logged.

There was a new gaffer that day. He had come from farm 52 Iowa and he treated his job with the enthusiasm and ignorance typical of the young boys. They threw their tiny bodies into the paths of the great machines. They pulled impurities from the ore and performed perfunctory maintenance on the machines that bored into the rock. They followed the waterhammer deeper and deeper into the ore veins carrying their tool, a heavy crowbar. They kept the hoses and cables that fed the machines out of the way of the loaders and other waterhammers.

Jordan's waterhammer had just been promoted from gaffer. He was young enough in his job to be excited about his first position operating the heavy machinery. Then he trained his blade of high pressure water on the rock and cut out the ore like a surgeon removing a tumor. Waterhammer had vision. It was as if he would see the ore behind the layers of worthless rock.

Waterhammer's hoses snagged on the growing pile of hewn rock and the helmeted gaffer ran out in front of the loader to unsnag them. Jordan stopped his machine just inches from the child.

"Gaffer, watch where you're going," Jordan said into his communicator. The child stood and pressed his hand to his neck. He squinted. The pain in his ears would be intense for several weeks. It would take months before his hearing would decay to a level that would allow him to work comfortably in the mine. Soon he would be completely deaf and rely entirely on his implant for aural input. The crashing of the machinery pounded his young ears and made it difficult for him to understand the voice that came directly from within his brain.

"Gaffer, clear the waterhammer and get out of the way of the loader," Jordan ordered. Finally understanding, the boy pulled the hoses free and ran to safety along the edge of the freshly hewn tunnel.

In his plastic armor, waterhammer walked forward several steps and trained the liquid blade on the ore vein in the wall in front of him. From safe within the loader's cab, Jordan could see rocks, steam, and pebbles burst out from in front of the man. Jordan scooped up several shovel loads and placed them into the waiting train carrier. He calculated the tonnage in his mind.

He planned his time in the sunroom. First, he would lay naked on his back on the table and absorb the warmth on his face. Then he would roll to his stomach and feel his back muscles loosen.

A flash of light brought him back to his senses. The gaffer burst out in front of the loader. The child's body flashed bright in the loader's headlights like a strobe as the kid ran past. Jordan jammed on the brakes.

"I may not be able to avoid terminating if you continue this behavior," Jordan said into the communicator. He gunned the loader's engine and released the air brake. As the tires began to roll the kid ran in front of the loader's shovel blade and stopped. He stood staring at Jordan. His eyes bored into Jordan's mind.

Jordan pressed his foot onto the brake pedal and slowed the machine. The shovel inched toward the child.

"Get out of the way, gaffer. I need to collect the load." Jordan calculated the mass of the ore already freed by waterhammer. He would need every moment of the work period to get all that rock into the delivery train. His foot lightened on the brake. The kid stood his ground.

Jordan stared into the kid's eyes from the cab. He released the brake and the huge machine lurched forward. The young gaffer didn't move. Instead, he held his hands forward toward Jordan. He held his hands palms up and cupped them as if he was holding something invisible.

The loader jolted to a halt. At first, Jordan couldn't figure why. He checked the engine statistics automatically expecting to see a mechanical failure. There was none. It was only when he looked back toward the gaffer that he felt the tension in his leg. His foot shook as he pressed down on the brake pedal.

A feeling he had never felt before rippled down his spine. Why had he stopped? The load was dry and waiting. Raw tonnage for the taking. Time in the sunroom.

The kid turned slowly and knelt. As the gaffer sank below the shovel, Jordan put the machine in reverse and pulled backward until he could see him again.

He stood on the brake pulling himself up out of his seat and aimed the loader's headlights on the gaffer.

The boy knelt aside the waterhammer who had gotten tangled in his hoses. He lay amid the rock, his equipment damaged, a thin stream of blood running onto the mine floor beside him.

Jordan typed a command into his console:

DAMAGE TO THE WATERHAMMER. PLEASE REPAIR.

He waited a few seconds for the request to transmit.

The response came: REPLACE OR REPAIR?

Jordan thought. He could have a replacement in under seven minutes. He could drive over the gaffer and the waterhammer and collect the load and no one would question his decision to terminate the men. He'd tell control to wash the ore. They'd deduct half the tonnage and replace the crew.

It could take hours to repair the waterhammer. Jordan's legs shook as he held his foot tense on the brake pedal. He felt himself needing air but he didn't know why.

He typed the word: REPAIR.

The word ACKNOWLEDGED appeared on the console.

Jordan secured the loader in place. The gaffer turned and looked at him. Jordan held his hand up to the cab window for the gaffer to see. The sign. Two fingers. Then he waited for the work period to end.

THE MEN QUEUED UP IN A SINGLE-FILE ROW AND REMOVED THEIR coveralls and hard hats. They stood naked and hairless, shivering in

the mine's damp cool air. One by one they got onto the conveyer belt that pulled them through the washing and feeding facility.

As Jordan stood waiting for an empty place on the belt he felt the poke in his back again.

Jordan held two fingers down at his side. As he raised his leg to mount the belt he looked quickly toward the waterhammer. He held up two fingers in a "V," then rotated his hand to the horizontal—the sign for sleep. Then he lay on his back on the belt and felt straps seal over him. Warm water coated his body. Brushes scoured his skin. He could feel his abdomen shrink as a robot arm attached a tube to a connection at his waist and removed the liquid and solid wastes from his gut.

He heard the control voice say, "Stop breathing," as the belt pulled him into the cleaning solution. His heart rate quickened. He thought he felt the belt stop as it had when he was a young gaffer. Ten men were killed when the belt broke and left them strapped beneath the surface of the cleaning solution. He had just been immersed. He strained against the straps and dislocated his shoulders. He survived by withstanding the pain and forcing his head out of the solution to the air. One wash period in thousands. The memory stayed with him. He imagined it would be with him forever.

His desire for air increased with his fear until he felt he would be forced to inhale the solution. But his body broke water into the air and he took his first breath with a gasp.

A robot arm connected a tube to the feeding connector mounted in his side. He felt his stomach fill with the warm nutrient. Then the tube was disconnected and he was moved into a large gallery filled with men. Naked, he walked up the metal stairs and across the steel catwalk to his sleeping chamber.

He felt the tingling in his neck as the control voice said, "Enter the chamber." He remained standing. "Enter the chamber," the voice said again.

He could feel the vibration in the catwalk as someone walked close behind him.

He turned and saw the waterhammer. Jordan turned quickly and put his arms around him, hugged the muscular man tightly against his body, and pulled him into the upright sleeping chamber.

Waterhammer resisted for a moment. Then he realized what Jordan was trying to do and he yielded. He winced as the door slammed closed and compressed his head and body against Jordan's.

Jordan moved his head to the side, and waterhammer's cheek fell against his. They interlaced their legs and arms. Jordan turned his head. He pressed the control connector on the side of his neck toward waterhammer's but he couldn't make contact.

Waterhammer was nervous. He pulled in air and wouldn't exhale. Jordan was only able to take quick shallow breaths.

"Breathe out," Jordan said with his mouth, hoping waterhammer was young enough to have some of his hearing. "Exhale or I'll die."

Waterhammer exhaled and quickly pulled in air. During the brief moment in which there was enough room for his chest to expand, Jordan inhaled. Then he exhaled again.

Jordan felt waterhammer's heartbeat slow. As the young man began to breathe calmly, Jordan took in air. He concentrated on the timing of waterhammer's breathing, letting the young man breathe freely while he paced himself. Waterhammer shifted his head slightly in the coffin, and Jordan was able to press his neck against the young man's and make connection.

"This is how we pass the word," said Jordan, forming the words in his mind. "It was time for you to learn."

"Loader Jordan. Thank you for not terminating me." The young man spoke through his connector.

Jordan ignored him. He said, "You said you understand the instructions."

"Yes, oh yes I do," said waterhammer. When I first read the manual, it didn't make any sense. I read the commands over and over. Soon, I understood what they meant."

"What do you think they are?" Jordan asked.

"They are instructions for operating our lives. Maybe they were written a long time ago. It refers to positions and machinery I don't understand. Are we supposed to follow those instructions, Loader Jordan? This seems like an unauthorized manual. I think I will be section 62'ed if control finds out I've learned these commands."

"That manual is a book, waterhammer. It's a manual from the surface. It was written by surface men for surface machinery and positions. Many work periods ago Timer Andrew visited the surface and brought the book down to us. Many men have read it but none of us understand it. The work it describes is hard for us to imagine."

"This is a surface manual?" asked waterhammer. "I remember the surface. I was on the surface when I was at the breeding farm. It was a horrible place. Strange machines. No work. Why would we want to keep words from the surface here in the world?"

Jordan said, "You know the words of men, don't you?"

"Yes, of course. We all know them. I learned them at the breeding farm."

"No," Jordan said. "Not the words of instruction. Not the reading for manuals and commands, the words of men." Jordan groped with his right hand and found waterhammer's hand next to his. He put his hand under waterhammer's and made a fist. He extended three fingers in the sign for "be still." Then he made the sign for "run," a single extended finger.

"You know these," Jordan said. "I know you do."

"Yes," said Waterhammer. "I learned those at the farm too."

Jordan said, "These are the words of men. Control does not understand these words. The words in the book and the words I give you now are also the words of men. Timer Andrew told us."

"Perhaps Timer Andrew was defective."

"Many men thought that. But his word requires my agreement. The word requires agreement from many of us. Today I ordered your repair because the gaffer would not yield to the loader. Gaffer's action required my agreement."

"He expected you would drive through us," said waterhammer.

"If he did, why did he put his body in front of me?" Jordan asked.

Waterhammer was silent. He let two breaths pass between them. Then he said, "I know that gaffer from the breeding farm. He always kept his body close to mine. When we learned he sat in proximity. When we were washed and fed he stood behind me in the queue. He was always close to me in the elevators. Now he is assigned to you, as I am, and he remains close to me. I think he follows one of the commands in the book."

"Have you shown him the book?"

"No," said waterhammer.

"Why do you think he follows the commands in the book if he has never seen the instructions?"

"I think the instructions are in him. I think he has been programmed."

Jordan said, "Timer Andrew said some instructions were in all of us. Not just the instructions for work, to gaff, to hammer, to load, to drive, and to time—but further instruction. Information we know but do not act on. He said one instruction above all would help the men. It's the instruction, 'to love.'"

"I have read that instruction many times in the book, Loader Jordan. Still, I don't completely understand it but I feel the instruction in my body."

"I do too," said Jordan. "And that is why I have chosen you to carry the word of Timer Andrew in secret. You have shown caring."

"Caring?"

"It is a word of Timer Andrew. You have done your work with energy that comes from your feeling. You smile when the work is going well. I know you can feel your actions. You feel them as I do."

"Yes, I do feel my work," said waterhammer.

"Each of us learns the word of Timer Andrew and does his best to understand it. Before you are terminated you will choose another man and give him the word. I will teach you how to find someone. In the meantime, you must know that it is not for you to understand Andrew. You need only pass the word to another. Timer Andrew said it was important that the word remains alive in men. The salvation of the men depends on the word. When all men know the word, men will be saved."

"Saved? Why do we need to be saved?" waterhammer asked.

"I don't know," said Jordan. "Perhaps, in time, one of us will know. For now, you must keep the word to yourself. Control will terminate you for having heard it. They will terminate you for simply mentioning the name 'Andrew.' Loaders are no longer given that name so you may never mention it. If they find you, they will terminate all of us."

"I will keep the word," said waterhammer.

"And when you are promoted to loader and are given your name, you will be given the power to terminate men. And then you will pass the word to another whom you can watch. And if you feel he will slip, if you feel he will make a mistake and utter the word of Andrew to any other, you will terminate him before he takes a step forward. These instructions will not be repeated."

"I understand, Loader Jordan."

"Very good. Now let's begin..."

JORDAN REMOVED HIS CLOTHING AND STOOD BEFORE THE massive doors. The bolts on the doors slid open. Jordan could feel the vibration in his feet as the giant door swung wide. There was a vibration in his neck as the controller spoke.

"Loader J-for-Jordan group A, 20-percent reward period beginning immediately."

Had he retrieved the entire load drilled by waterhammer he could have expected a tenfold period for exceeding his quota by a wide margin. He had simply let the loader idle while the maintenance crew collected waterhammer and took him for repair. When the work period had ended he found himself only slightly over his quota. Performance worthy of only the smallest period allotted. He would spend the first fifth of the workday in the sunroom. The remainder of the day he would spend at his station remembering the bright warmth.

He remembered pieces of an instruction from the book Thomas had given him, "...tiger burning bright...what immortal hand or eye could frame thy fearful symmetry..." But he had only been taught enough to read the machine manuals. What was a tiger? What symmetry should he fear?

As the door opened the light from inside escaped into the hallway. Where it touched him there was warmth and white. He never knew his skin could be so white. As he stepped into the room and felt the light engulf him, it was as if he had fallen into liquid. It was a feeling he remembered from somewhere long before. He hardly noticed the massive door swing shut behind him.

There was a man lying naked on one of the flat tables arranged along the walls of the square white room. On the ceiling was a round white light source.

The man sensed the vibration of the door closing. He slowly lifted his head and looked at Jordan. His eyes were openings onto a cold emptiness. Jordan hardly recognized him, his skin so white, eyes so black and deep. He raised a fist and signed the men's greeting to his mentor, Driver Thomas.

Thomas sat up on the table and motioned for Jordan to sit beside him. As Jordan sat Thomas reached over and put his hand around the back of Jordan's neck. He jumped off the table, stood in front of him, and pulled Jordan's head toward him. He leaned forward until Jordan's chin was over his shoulder. Then he pressed Jordan's neck against his, touching his control connector against Jordan's. Instinctively, Jordan pulled away.

"Don't be afraid," Driver Thomas said, a voice coming from the center of Jordan's head. "Control doesn't monitor here."

Jordan relaxed and leaned into Driver Thomas.

Driver Thomas said, "But we won't have much time. If the door opens we'll be on monitor. They'll 62 us."

Jordan tried to pull away to look into Driver Thomas's face, but Thomas kept Jordan's neck pinned in an iron grip.

"Why are you doing this?" said Jordan.

"Last lesson, Jordan," said Thomas. "Control knows about the book. Even now maintenance is searching for it. They searched the K group and suspected Loader Solomon. That's why he was terminated. When they couldn't find the book they terminated everyone. I saw the order pass for three hundred replacements. An entire group, Jordan. Three hundred men. Three hundred lives."

"Waterhammer didn't show the book to anyone," Jordan said. He felt a tightness grow in his chest. It was a pain like the one he had felt the day before when he stared down the shovel of the loader at gaffer and waterhammer on the mine floor.

"I have to give you all the lessons at once now," Thomas said. "There are many books. Many carry the word."

"My waterhammer said he understands," said Jordan.

"Love is the lives of the men," said Thomas. "Does he understand that?"

Jordan looked down at the muscles in Thomas's back. Then he stared out at the blank wall and the empty tables in the sunroom. The warm white light loosened the muscles in his back and arms.

"The lives of the men," said Jordan. "My life?"

"All life. The decision to repair rather than to replace. The worth of a man to himself. Worth of life as that of the ore."

"Men worth as ore?"

"On the surface, Timer Andrew learned that men are bred from other men. They value their own lives as reward. Love is the value of men's lives. It is somehow like time in the sunroom. Like promotion. It is the value of men for other men."

In his mind Jordan saw the gaffer kneeling beside the wounded waterhammer. He remembered the boy's eyes as he threatened with the shovel of his machine. Why hadn't the boy moved?

"My gaffer," said Jordan. "Last work period he prevented me from taking a dirty load. Waterhammer was injured. I should have taken him with the ore."

"How did gaffer stop you?" asked Thomas.

"He stood in front of my machine."

"Why didn't you simply take the ore with them both?"

"I don't know," said Jordan. "He looked at me as if ... as if he could damage my machine with his eyes."

"Now you are seeing what I see," said Thomas. "There are instructions not learned but known. The gaffer knows without teaching. I had hoped you could come to this conclusion as well, but time is short."

Thomas pulled back from Jordan and took the man's head in his hands. He pulled Jordan's face toward his and pressed his lips against Jordan's. Then he leaned aside and made connection with his neck again.

"That is the sign for Love. That is the symbol of the value of man's life."

They felt a vibration that could only mean the door was opening.

"The period is not over," said Jordan.

"Control must monitor this room after all," said Thomas, scanning the blank walls. Thomas pointed and Jordan spotted an imperfection in the seamless walls, a spot slightly darker than the brilliant white all around.

Jordan felt his heart race. His breathing deepened and he felt the white of the room intensify. He felt he could hear with his ears again.

"It's as if the word itself is more powerful than the men," said Thomas. They saw the dark crack between the wall and the door as the massive hinge swung open.

"What do we do?" Jordan said. He looked back at the door, then quickly touched his neck connector to Thomas's again.

"These are the final words of Timer Andrew," said Thomas. "The last lesson. Remember this and run. Control is on the surface. They cannot terminate all of us."

Jordan felt Thomas press his hands into his back. He could feel the warmth from Thomas's body, the vibration of Thomas's heart, the rhythm of Thomas's breathing.

Thomas continued, "Have the men switch their control connections from radio to cable. Go to your machine and destroy the yellow control box. Then it, too, will ignore signals from control."

Thomas grabbed Jordan's arm and pulled him to the center of the

room as the door stopped in its travel and the mobile particle weapon appeared in the doorway.

Jordan felt a tingling in his neck as Thomas pulled him close for the last time. Thomas embraced Jordan and made connection. He said, "Timer Andrew walked out. He walked out of the mine and they didn't stop him. He worked for them on the surface and they gave him time. He worked for them in the mine and they gave him more time. Now, I will give you time."

Then Thomas put both his hands on Jordan's chest and pushed him away. Surprised, Jordan fell to the floor. He heard the control voice. "Driver T-for-Thomas group M and Loader J-for-Jordan group A found in violation of quota as required by ordinance 62.1.3 ..."

Thomas quickly raised his fist and thrust one finger into the air as Jordan looked up from the floor.

Jordan remembered the sign instinctively. He had seen it many times as a boy at the breeding farm. His muscles tensed as if he had been programmed. As the particle weapon charged he propelled himself through the narrow darkness between the machine and the door, from the white sunroom to the dark of the mine. He could feel the burning backscatter on his legs as he pulled himself through the gap. The beam blast ricocheted off the rear wall of the room and tore through the same space he claimed for himself.

He didn't turn back. Outside he grabbed his work suit and put it on with his helmet. He stepped into his boots and ran down the catwalk to the elevators. He reached the cars leading to the mine entrance and watched the lights flash as the elevator rose to meet him. He felt tired and didn't know why. The air had grown thick. It was hard to breathe.

The elevator arrived and he entered the car with another shift. The weight in the car was off-balance and the doors would not close. Slowly, he edged his way past the 31 men in the car. When he neared the front he placed his hands on the back of the man in front of him. With a spark of thought, he pushed the startled man clear of the car and out into the empty gallery.

The elevator sensed the change in weight. The doors closed and they began to descend. Jordan felt a tingling in his neck. Then he heard the control voice.

"Stand clear of Loader J-for-Jordan group A." The men in the car pressed themselves into the walls of the car, clearing a space around him as the elevator came to a halt. As the door opened, Jordan could see the metallic gleam of the particle weapon stationed at the elevator door. He thought of the hot beam. He could see the warning lights on the unit make the spectral shift from green to red as it charged. He remembered the ricochet from the strike that had killed Driver Thomas only moments before.

The doors opened completely and the machine inched forward to fill the chamber with its deadly radiation. Jordan dove toward the machine. He clawed at the cables on its exposed surface and pulled himself past it and out of the elevator. He stood behind the machine and turned briefly to see the 30 men in blue overalls and white hardhats fall limp in the elevator car.

Jordan ran to his machine. He followed the empty mine corridors until he felt vibration in the air. He could feel the rumbling in his feet, the pressure waves in the air pounded against his chest as he neared the mine activity.

He could feel the steam and dust in his face. He saw the clouds of yellow-gray rock and black ore blasted to dust under the pressure of the waterhammer and the loader. Suddenly, the vibration stopped.

The men turned as he arrived. Waterhammer and gaffer stood looking at him as he approached his silent machine. He found the gaffer's heavy crowbar lying on the ground next to the loader. He lifted it as the lights began to flicker.

Jordan leveled the rod at the yellow box mounted on the side of his machine and swung. Over and over he propelled the heavy iron rod against the yellow box. With the vibration of each impact the muscles in his arms tightened, bulged, and burned like a beam flash. He could feel the memory of Driver Thomas grow like an animal in him. Its arms and legs pressed outward from his chest. It was a cold uncomfortable feeling. He imagined the maintenance men lifting Thomas's limp body and putting it in the disposal chute. He could see Thomas's face, limp and expressionless—a face that had only moments before told him he was as valuable as the ore he drilled.

Men valued as ore. Men valued as men.

The men in the mine watched him then looked upward toward the portable lighting that began to go dark under command from control.

Jordan pulled his body into each crowbar swing. He could feel the metal box yield slightly under each blow. Darkness enveloped them like termination. He swung in the blackness, remembering where the box had been. He could feel it crumpling under the blows of the heavy iron bar. Suddenly he took a swing and the rod continued farther than it had gone before. He dropped the rod and felt the machine. He could feel the box dangling from cables connecting it to the loader. He grabbed the box and pulled. The cables hung firm.

Then he felt arms around his waist. He stopped for a moment. The arms released him and he felt hands traveling along his body, up to his shoulders, over the ripples in his arms. Then the hands were on his hands. And then they were gone. He felt the box move in his hands. Someone was pulling on it. Jordan leaned backward and pulled in time with the second pair of hands. Time after time he pulled until the box came free and he stumbled backward.

JORDAN DROPPED THE BOX AND MOUNTED THE MACHINE. Once inside he felt along the control console and flipped the switch. He felt the vibration in his seat as the loader sprang to life. He turned on the headlights and illuminated the mine shaft. Instinctively, he reached for the control socket and slapped it to his neck. Instead of hearing a hiss of static and the voice from within his head there was silence. The gauge and display panels were dark.

He sat and stared at the men standing in the mine. They looked back at him motionless. They waited for an action. Jordan left the cab. He went to each man on the floor and pushed the switches on the control connections on their necks to "cable." Without a cable connected they would not hear commands—an offense for which they could all be killed.

Waterhammer stood alongside the loader looking in. His waterknife hung limp around his chest from its straps. The gaffer stood holding the crowbar. Jordan got back into the cab. He remembered the tightness he felt in his legs when he stopped the loader in front of the wounded men. The feeling returned. He thought of Thomas. He smashed his foot onto the accelerator and turned the machine around. He gritted his jaws tight. He gripped the controls as his palms grew wet and his knuckles faded white and bloodless. He felt he was watching someone else.

Jordan aimed the machine's shovel at a yellow control box on the wall and drove into it with such force that the metal shovel blade slashed through it and into the soft rock in the wall. The gaffers and waterhammers were free.

There was a burst of white steam from beside the vehicle as waterhammer regained control of his tool. Gaffer freed the hoses and followed behind as waterhammer aimed his tool forward and leaped onto the tracks for the ore train. He stopped, turned toward Jordan, and held his hand up in a fist.

Jordan felt the adrenaline jolt as it hit his bloodstream and scratched energy against his muscles. He turned the loader and drove onto the tracks. Waterhammer nodded, and Jordan hit the accelerator. The loader lurched forward, up the tracks, toward salvation and the word.

Jordan could see the track appearing from the blackness of the mine shaft as his loader rolled forward. He could feel unfamiliar vibrations in his seat. He knew a train was coming, but he knew there was a vibration within himself as well. He imagined the vibration was burning, an intensity he had never known.

In an eye blink an ore train was upon him. It plowed at full speed into his shovel and drove the loader backward. Jordan was thrown

out of his seat. His body crashed into the gauge-panel and windshield of his cab. The loader door flapped open against its hinges. He shook his head. The pain started as an annoying itch, then crescendoed to an intolerable explosion.

His vision blurred. He tried to see out of the front window of the loader. Wetness dripped from his forehead and stung his eyes. Through the fog of pain and blood, he could see men leaving the train. Maintenance men. Surface men. Men with weapons.

He heard Thomas's words, "They can't terminate us all."

Jordan pushed himself backward onto the seat and smashed his foot down onto the accelerator. The loader lurched forward. Its shovel cut into the small train. The train yielded, twisting and rolling off the tracks as the shovel mangled the metal in front of it.

A maintenance man in white overalls and a blue helmet appeared in the loader doorway. Jordan saw the man level a particle gun toward him. There was a blast of white from behind that turned into a dark mist. The maintenance man fell from the loader in two pieces as the white blade of water slashed again and again. Jordan leaned over and looked out of the loader door. The uniformed man had been cut in half. His feet and arms twitched as a blotch of dark liquid widened around him. Jordan had seen so many gaffers and waterhammers in the same condition. The sight held no significance to him.

Unconsciously, he tapped the command to signify a dirty load.

There was another burst of white. With a single twist of his waist waterhammer had cut across the ranks of men escaping the train. Then he trained his water blade on the train and sliced across it. Jordan took a breath and manipulated the loader's controls. His mind filled with Thomas's words as he worked the machine unconsciously as if it were his own body. He pushed the train pieces aside with his mechanical arms and legs. Man and machine.

"Tiger," he thought. "I am the tiger burning bright." His arms and legs shook.

Waterhammer trotted up the tunnel firing his tool as a weapon. Jordan watched him disappear into the darkness. He took a breath and felt the pain in his head sink to his chest and open a void. An emptiness opened in him again as he watched gaffer follow waterhammer up the tunnel freeing the hoses, disconnecting and reconnecting them to new water sources as they moved.

Fearful symmetry.

Jordan followed them and kept them in the flaming life of the vehicle headlights. Waterhammer destroyed the yellow control boxes that he found mounted on the tunnel walls. They came to a junction of tunnels where a group of men were returning from a shift at the mine face.

The men stopped and watched as Jordan rolled past. He held his fist up with one finger extended.

"Run."

Then they were past the junction and back into the shaft.

Jordan rolled forward and upward. And suddenly there were men all around. Waterhammers and gaffers. They marched alongside Jordan's loader. Some were curious and threw question signs in the men's sign language. Most just followed. At each junction in the tunnel they met more men who joined them.

Jordan forgot the pain in his head. He wiped the blood from his eyes and kept the headlights from his machine trained forward. Waterhammer cut into a yellow control box and a connector fell out.

Jordan heard words. The voice was the control voice but the words were those of Andrew. The words of change. "Love will save the men. They can't terminate us all." He could see the men touch their necks. They looked at each other wondering what had happened. And he saw the strange connector from the broken box attached to waterhammer's neck.

Waterhammer's face split wide in a smile. Jordan saw Andrew and Thomas in his mind. From the pain and the emptiness, from the void within him, came a spark as warm as the sunroom. A spark as warm as life.

Waterhammer quoted Andrew's book for all of them to hear: "I will not cease from mental fight, nor shall my sword sleep in my hand, till we have built Jerusalem, in England's green and pleasant land."

Jordan wiped the blood from his eyes and willed his machine forward as the men followed. He could feel the vibration of their footsteps as the crowd multiplied. And then there was light in the distance. It was a light he had never seen before—bright and blue-white. It didn't flicker or strobe against his blinking eyes. He pressed down on the accelerator as the train track slid beneath his wheels and reflected the white light. The light grew. He could see shapes inside it. Colors. Colors he had never seen.

It grew until it was as large as the loader. Then it was alongside him. It was above him. It was all around. His head swiveled under command from his eyes to absorb, to know. His dark world faded behind him as a new bright world opened ahead.

He secured the vehicle and jumped to the ground. A strange soft ground. The light was all around. It warmed him, caressing his body from all sides as if he were immersed in a warm ocean. His head, his body, his legs, all warmed to life and refueled by the glory of the brightness. He looked up and saw the lamp. He felt light and full of power.

Men rushed all around him. They waved their arms and ran. Some fell on the ground and stared upward. Jordan saw machines and shapes he had never seen before. He looked from side to side but couldn't find the walls. The ceiling was invisible. The power inside him burst and he felt his face tighten. His mouth opened. He bared his teeth as he felt himself press the air from his lungs. He saw other men doing the same. Teeth bared, they ran with the edges of their mouths pulled up toward their eyes.

Then he was running too. Running through the chambers without walls or ceiling. Running past the shapes and the machines, the warmth of the great lamp above powering his strength. He ran. He bared his teeth and forced the air from his lungs until his throat ached.

Jordan came upon waterhammer standing alone. The man had removed his tool and his clothing. He opened his mouth and held his arms outstretched as Jordan approached. Jordan walked between his arms, put his head over waterhammer's shoulders, and pressed his neck against waterhammer's neck. Their control sockets touched.

"What the hammer? What the chain?" waterhammer said.

"Did he who made the lamb make thee?" replied Jordan. "The truth can never be told so as to be understood, and not be believed." Jordan pushed away. He put his hands on waterhammer's shoulders and looked into his eyes. He was sure he could see the tiger burning—life burning for salvation.

Waterhammer's body stiffened as if each of his muscles pulsed simultaneously. Jordan released him wondering what had happened. He stood back and saw waterhammer's eyes roll back in his head. The muscular man collapsed to the ground, motionless.

Jordan looked forward. A maintenance man leveled a particle gun toward him. There were machines in the sky. Machines rolled toward them from all around, flashing red lights. Armed maintenance men wearing uniforms he had never seen before leaped from the vehicles and chased the miners. The blue-coated men fell lifeless all around him. Jordan stretched his arms outward to communicate and closed his eyes. He waited for the blast.

It never came. When he opened his eyes, he saw the maintenance man standing with his gun at his side pointed down. Jordan held his hand out toward the man and moved slowly toward him.

Jordan said in his mind. "Love seeketh not itself to please, nor for itself hath any care, but for another gives its ease ..." He knew the man wouldn't hear him.

"... and builds a Heaven in Hell's despair." Jordan put his arms around the maintenance man. He put his chin on the man's shoulder and touched his neck against the maintenance man's. He could feel the maintenance man's arms rise around him. The maintenance man patted his hands against Jordan's back.

Jordan said, "Did he who made you make me?"

There was a flash of light and a brief pain in his head.

Then there was nothing. ❧

ARTHUR'S WISHES

Having power is one thing. Being able to wield it is another.

BY TIM MYERS

Illustrated By Gary Lippincot

THERE WAS STILL AN HOUR TIL THE ANGELUS bell when Arthur and the other boys came running to the great house to meet the coaches.

It was late March, winter dying hard, sun descending over fields and woods, the smell of cold still hovering as twilight came on. The boys had been playing Seige-the-ditch when sounds of teams and wheels and harness came through the trees to them. Arthur was still half-dreaming as he rounded into the coach yard, and for a moment he imagined the elegant boots of fey gentlefolk descending enameled steps. But when he saw the four rough coaches, spattered and dirty from the roads, all his pretending slipped away and he peered intently even as he ran, at the newcomers. He'd known they were coming, knew the silkened ladies to be his aunts, the tall swarthy man in

green and beige to be his father's cousin. They were relatives, adults, and he didn't think much about them except to stare—until his eyes met hers.

He gazed only for a moment. Suddenly he was whisked toward her by a crowd of chattering ladies, and she to him. His mother was saying, "Arthur, this is your cousin. This is Morgana. She's come very far to visit us. Why don't you go play with her now?"

Arthur looked at Morgana again and didn't know what to think. She was smiling as a cat smiles when it stretches. The women's hands pushed them together and turned them toward the stables. As they walked slowly toward the mews, Arthur could hear behind him the uproar of the adults and their servants and luggage, all of it moving away and packing itself with swirls of laughter and high, quick speech into the entry hall of the great castle.

"You're younger than I," the girl said, her voice sharp. Morgana looked something like a fox, Arthur decided, only—very good to look at. She paused and eyed him with her head slightly cocked. "How many years have you?"

"I'm eleven," Arthur murmured, looking down where the hens had made shallow tracks on the bare ground.

Morgana looked off into the distance. At the sight of her fine, clean profile and her hair streaming back over her woven collar, Arthur found himself thinking of a head on a Roman coin. "I shall be fourteen next Michaelmas," she said carelessly. "This is a farm, isn't it?"

The boy looked around at the stables and the hulking stone barns beyond them and the sties where the pigs were stretched lathering in cold mud and wondered how a girl almost fourteen could ask such a silly question. But before he could answer she continued.

"We live in the north. My father is a lord. He is a fighting man. He has many servitors—hundreds."

Whatever a "servitor" might be, Arthur felt sure there were none on his father's estate. And because he had no answer to her boast, the tiniest spark of anger jumped to life down inside him, like a stray flake of flaring metal from the hammer's blow against the anvil. He puffed up his chest a little. When he spoke he felt his voice thickening.

"My father is Ector—Sir Ector, I mean—and he owns all these lands ... and all the crops on the lands ... and the beasts, and the ... buildings ... and lots of people work for him!"

But his look of triumph was completely lost on his cousin, who was plaiting a bit of straw. They had come to the mews. Morgana put her hand into one of the cages and offered the plaited straw to a great hawk, who took it suddenly with his foot. But one of the talons brushed her ungloved hand, and she drew it back sharply with a little cry of pain—a cry that Arthur, in spite of himself, thought very pretty. Morgana quickly put her finger to her mouth but suddenly spat—which Arthur did not think pretty at all. He looked down at the bright blood against the pale yellow straw at their feet.

"Wicked bird!" she hissed, and then threw her hands toward the creature, stopping just short of the bars. Arthur's body suddenly thrilled with cold as the bird, following Morgana's gestures, began to spread its wings, stretching them wider and wider as her hands directed, until its raptor voice leapt out in a harsh scream of pain. Then Morgana dropped her arms and the hawk suddenly huddled, dazed.

"You might shut your mouth," the girl said indifferently over her shoulder as she turned toward the woods.

Arthur had no desire to follow her, but as he turned back toward the house he thought of what his mother had said about "playing" with Morgana—knowing well that however kindly she said such things, she never said them lightly. So he turned again to follow his cousin dutifully down the path that led through the forest to the bottom lands along the river, where flowers grew so thick in summer.

When he emerged from the trees, smelling the water and hearing its easy burble, he saw that Olin and Tub and Eustace were there. Morgana was sizing them up with a level gaze, standing half in shadow beside the path. The boys hadn't seen her, Arthur realized. They turned at the sound of his step.

"This is Morgana. She's from the north. She's my cousin," he said flatly.

"These boys are peasants," Morgana said unpleasantly, looking up into the branches of the trees where a gust of wind was passing. At this Arthur felt the little spark of anger brightening a good deal. Morgana turned away and began to examine, with mysterious intensity, a little clump of bright new grass. Arthur turned to his friends, attempting to ignore her in turn.

"What are you doing, Tub?" he asked. Tub was the cook's son; he always had the best ideas.

"We're gone fishing, Arthur, with this here net. We're gone casting it."

"Whose net is it?" Arthur asked, fingering the rough cords.

Eustace looked around guiltily and whispered, "It's the one Tor stole. Tor said we could use it if we give him a fish."

Arthur turned back to Tub. "But the net Tor saw was rotten, eh, Tub?"

The words had hardly left his mouth when he heard a hideous shriek from Morgana. He whirled to see her standing beneath a chestnut tree with rage in her eyes, looking straight at him, the little tuft of grass still in her hands.

"How dare you palindrome me!" she spat at him, flinging the stalks aside as she stepped forward, her arms stretched violently toward him. He cowered in terror.

"How dare you! You think yourself clever! If it weren't for the Law I'd strike you here and now, yes, strike you hard!" With that she wrenched her arms up and away from him and then seemed to spasm.

ARTHUR WATCHED IN UTTER HORROR AS THE great oak branch she'd pointed at exploded into flame. He shuddered as it came crashing to the ground, looking like the burned-out spine of a little boat.

The other boys ran for the woods, dropping their net. He watched them go, wondering frantically why he wasn't running too, and then turned again toward Morgana. But she was sitting on a rock now, smiling over a little butter-white crocus she'd picked.

Suddenly Arthur was in tears—the changes having come too fast and too unreasoned. How could she just sit there after doing such a terrible thing? He sobbed in an uprush of fear, his body flailing about with the strength of the fear but his feet still rooted somehow to the ground.

"Why can't I move? What are you going to do to me?" he wailed.

"Why—grant you your wishes, of course. Why are you carrying on like such a simpleton?" Morgana had tossed the crocus aside and was peering at some shelf fungus on the side of a fallen log.

"Wishes! What are you saying, wishes!?" Arthur bellowed.

"You palindromed me," she said simply. "'But the net Tor saw was rotten, eh, Tub?'" She said it in his own voice so that his heart went cold to hear it. "It was a palindrome. I'm not so stupid as not to have noticed. So you win your three wishes of me. May we get on with it, please?" She turned back to the fungus.

A palindrome—slowly it came to Arthur. A magical sentence whose letters run the same forward as they do backward. *It must have some power over her!* he crowed to himself, exulting. And then, realizing finally as he stared wide-eyed at the back of her brocaded robe—*She's a witch!*

"But I didn't mean to say it!" he blurted, hoping to appease her. He regretted that rashness immediately. When he heard her angry gasp, he fell to his knees and raised his arms to ward off whatever evil she might hurl at him. But nothing came; there was only her voice again, its silken menace buried under scorn.

"I should have known that a low-born farm brat of the Midlands couldn't have been so quick, or so subtle! It just fell out of your mouth, then! Why should I have been paying attention while you prattled with those little manure people? Mother will sco—"

She stopped abruptly and straightened her shoulders.

"And yet, it came, you spoke it—it wasn't perfect, but it was good

enough. So now you have three wishes. That is the Law. You are an ignorant boy. Make your wishes!" With that she sat down on the rock again, her bluish lizard-skin shoes crushing the heads of newly sprouted snowdrops.

"Why do you say 'Law'?" Arthur asked timidly. "Will the bailiff come and make you do it?"

Morgana snorted. "Not the weak little laws of men! It's the Law, the Deep Law. It's the Law of ... things! But I'm sick of your stupidity—make your wishes!"

Arthur's thoughts slowed out in the silence and grew stronger. He became aware of the flow of the brook, heard its feline rushing sounds, saw the late sun glinting off its surface. *So this is the go of it!* he thought, his courage rising at the sudden evening of the sides. *So I am to wish! For whatever I want!* When he spoke he spoke boldly, flushed with the opportunity to return her insults. "I'm no witch or godless magic-maker!" he proclaimed, and—when that did not produce the desired effect—continued, "I'm going to be a knight, and my brother is already a knight! And I'm not evil, either, so I'll make a brave, good wish for my first wish!"

Morgana sat without changing expression. And Arthur realized he'd have to find a wish to match his boasts.

While she ran her fingers over the grain of the rock, he scrambled desperately through his thoughts, anger more powerful even than his greed at this good fortune. But greed was powerful, too, and little by little it took hold of him.

"I wish for..."

A great number, a great, vast number—as many as the geese and swans and ducks flying in autumn, or the stars in the sky; as many as the flies that buzz in the stables on an August day. A thousand is more than a hundred—ten thousand is more than a thousand—what is that other number, that great huge one? That number the teacher spoke about? Then it came to him, and he spit it out as if it were a little live bird in his mouth.

"I wish for a million more wishes!"

He stood like a conqueror, looking her full in the face, as a solitary insect drifted soundlessly past on the darkening air above them and lifted away on a breeze, day shifting easily toward night.

Morgana only laughed. "So you listen to your schoolmaster, do you? But you are very dull. You may not wish for a million more wishes, nor a billion, nor a trillion, nor a quintillion, nor for every wish ever wished, past, present, and to come. The Law says three. You are not very clever."

He'd never heard such powerful number-words before, and as she spoke them he felt each one going off in his mind like a little burst of sparks. And he blushed at his error. But he was growing accustomed to her mockery, and this latest attack had only made him more determined. He must wish well, he must make manly wishes, knightly wishes—he must show this female he was not to be trifled with!

Suddenly he realized that the stoniness in his legs was gone. He took two steps over the cold ground and prayed silently in gratitude. Then he squared his shoulders to address her.

But what to wish for? His shoulders settled again. Hmm ... there was a story he'd heard, from Tub's old mother back in the pantry... *a prince, yes, a prince... and the wizard had given him a ring, a gold ring, with magical power... a ring that pricked the prince's finger each time he did something wrong. Yes, that was it! That would show this witch-girl what kind of knight he could be!*

"For my first wish," he said, in sonorous tones exactly like those of the priest at Mass, "I wish that no wish I make cause any harm to anyone." Then, thinking of Hauberk the mastiff, to whom he gave old soup bones, he added, "To no human—and to no beast or creature either."

He was very pleased to see her turn deliberately and look up at him in surprise. For a moment there was something warm in her eyes, or so he thought—but soon they took on that flinty sheen again, and she gave a short laugh without any laughter in it.

"Very well, Sir Ninnyhammer—you have your wish. But you know nothing of the Law. The wish is granted, but you'll have a deal of trouble spending it, I can tell you."

Arthur felt confused for a moment. Then he decided she was only being spiteful and couldn't admit he'd done a noble thing. Moths had begun fluttering among the still leafless trees across the brook and the water was quickly going black with the coming night, silver ripples moving across it. Arthur felt himself grow weak with pleasure at the prospect of making his second wish. All desire to impress Morgana was gone; all he could imagine now was some impossible preciousness in his own hands, and he cast his imagination far in search of just what it might be. In this giddiness he was well beyond considering the third wish or formulating any specific plan for it. Besides, he knew—from experience—that the Law, whatever it was, had no loopholes. And he felt, standing there in his everyday woolen clothes and worn leather boots, like a king—a king! in a king's storeroom, or in the treasury, or in the armory—or in a mage tower, among potions and books and alembics! What might he not have! A word, a bit of his own breath, could bring anything into his grasp.

"I shall have...," he began quietly, as if starting a litany, "I shall have a suit of armor, with the helmet all in gold and plumed with a...with the feather of a...a pheasant...with the pauldrons and breastplate and cuisses and greaves all silver... and a great sword, a Damascene... and a shield. A shield with figures on it, like that one in the old book."

Nothing happened. He stood there in the near-dark expecting lights and sounds and the feel of the things in his hands and on his body, but there was nothing. He could see her features dimly, where she still sat on the rock. When her voice came it had no scorn in it, just the kind of weary frustration he might hear from his mother or his nurse, or his father, or the priest, or even Tub's father—the voice of a tired adult striving to be patient with a child.

"Do you really think such a wish will harm no one? What will you do with your armor and weapons—play at the quintain all day and sing to a harp by the fire come evening?

"Besides"—and here all the sharpness returned to her voice—"a knight armored in gold and silver would be felled by the first mace-blow he had to bear. Gold and silver are soft, my duckling. You have lost your second wish."

Arthur started up in desperation. "Lost it?!!" he cried shrilly. "How can I lose it if I get nothing? That's not fair!"

"Nonetheless, you have one more wish—one more only," Morgana said.

"Is that what the Law says?" Arthur demanded hotly.

There was silence. The sky itself was darkening now; he could see it through the overhanging branches, especially through the gap where Morgana had destroyed the oak branch. Remembering that, he regretted his anger in a little rush of fear. But still she said nothing, brushing away a little cloud of gnats with a pass of her hand.

Finally she spoke. "No. It is not what the Law says. You may wish again—only once—for your second wish. But if you fail again, the wish is lost. That is the Law; I may not lie about it. So wish and have an end to it, or we'll be sitting in this wretched cold place all night."

Think, think! he told himself. *One more mistake and you lose the second wish! And if you make a mistake with the third you'll have nothing! Think! How can I keep from making a mistake? How?—oh. Yes, yes, of course.*

"Is there anything in the Law that says I can't wish to make a good wish? I mean a right one, a wish that goes with the Law? Can I wish with my second wish that my third wish can't be wrong? By the Law, I mean?"

Morgana started to speak but stopped. She started again and again bit back the words. Suddenly he realized she was flustered. He crowed wordlessly to himself. In her surprise at his cleverness she finally managed to say, "No...that's...the Law says nothing about that—I don't think."

"You mean you don't know everything there is to know about the Law?" Arthur said it quietly, feeling it bite in.

"I'll not answer to you, you little dung-heap!" she hissed. "Make your wishes and put an end to this stupidity!"

"For my second wish, then, I wish that any wrong wish I make for my third wish not be counted, and I can have as many wishes as it takes to get a right wish—by the Law. That's my second wish," Arthur said.

When he turned away to concentrate on his task, he noticed a pair

of bats flitting and swerving over the water. The stars had begun to appear in earnest. *I must think*! he told himself, settling deeply into his mind as the sounds of the world around him faded away. *I must think as a man would think, as my father would think. What would my father wish for?*

Of course.

After stating the wish a dozen different ways to himself, seeking flaws, weighing words, he spoke it out: "I wish to have the power to bring rain to our crops any time I want, and to drive off the winds if they threaten the crops, and…to bring the sun when we need it. I wish to master the weather for our estate." That is a good wish, he said to himself.

"Impossible," she said.

"Why?" Arthur snapped, feeling befuddled again.

"Playing adult isn't the same as being adult," Morgana replied haughtily. "Your wish would hurt many people. Therefore the Law will not grant it."

"How could it hurt people?" Arthur asked, incredulous. "It would help the crops grow, and we'd always have food to eat, and no one would be hungry!"

She stood up. "Come here," she said, and turned toward the bank of the brook. The moon had just begun to rise. Arthur followed her, fear rising in him again, but then remembered the Law—whatever it was, he knew it would hold firm as long as he were on the proper side of it. Morgana stopped at the bank and gestured toward the face of the water, just now tinged by the strengthening moonlight as it came lucidly through the bare trees.

Arthur looked down into the water where she pointed and saw the net lying where the boys had dropped it, half-tangled in the reeds, rising and falling gently with the river's easy motion against its banks.

"Look into the net and you will see what your own dull imagination doesn't show you," Morgana commanded, and suddenly—where there had been purring dark moonlit ripples—he saw the sea.

It was truly the sea—he knew that instantly. Not a picture or some clever illusion, but the sea itself, under a storm wilder than any land storm he'd ever seen. It was pitching up great waves, and the froth whipping from their crests was fouling the whole sky white. Suddenly he thought he saw something against the vast hillsides of the waves. "It's a ship!" he cried. He watched as its hull disappeared behind a huge ridge of dark water only to reappear as the trough it was in suddenly heaved skyward. Arthur glanced quickly at Morgana; she was staring intently at the scene, her eyes bright with fear.

Then it's real! he thought. "What is this?" he shouted at her, "Why are you showing me this?!"

She turned to him. "This is your wish. If you turn the winds away from your father's lands and send the rain off to sea, a storm may grow over the water and become the monster you see here. Many lives are endangered—either at sea or somewhere else on land."

With a fierce pain in his stomach, Arthur turned to watch again. The waves loomed and raged even more wildly than before. He could make out a lantern swinging violently at the ship's bow, and he thought he could see figures moving on the wave-pummeled deck. "Take it away!" he cried, shutting his eyes tight in horror. "I don't want that wish! I unwish it!"

When he looked again there was only the net—but for an instant he thought it was some skeleton nudging against an empty beach. "Are they all drowned?" he asked in a whisper, his body burning with guilt and fear. "Did I unwish it soon enough?"

"You didn't 'unwish' it. You didn't have to. It couldn't happen because of your second wish."

He looked at her in amazement. Then he felt a rage deeper than any feeling he'd ever known. For a moment he thought to strike her, and could only just contain himself. "But it was real! I saw your face! It was real!"

She had seen his thoughts. Now her eyes were very hard. But she spoke quietly, and Arthur understood her intent. "Remember yourself, boy—and commit no foolish act that you will regret. It was real. But it was not now. Nor will your wish cause it to be. Whether or not it happens of itself is something we cannot know. It resides in the depths of the Law. That is all we can know. Now finish your wish."

But it was always the same. Arthur would strain his thoughts toward a lawful wish and Morgana would quietly unravel it each time. When he wished that his father be king, she showed him the bloody corpses of rival princes and their weeping wives and children. When he wished for a great cathedral to be built in a nearby village, she showed him the broken bodies of quarrymen and workers fallen from high scaffolds. When he wished for a bountiful store of food in the larders of the great house, she showed him hungry peasants in the woods—and dead animals hung about the kitchen for portioning. When he wished for a fine ship, she showed him birds and forest creatures of all kinds—jays, weasels, deer, squirrels, woodpeckers, rootmice—all homeless or dead for the felling of the trees, and a little carpenter's boy who'd lost his eye while playing with his father's auger. He figured out for himself that the unification of the Realm or the conquest of France or of the Saracens would be bloody, and he needed no witch-mirror to see the carnage such wishes would bring. And when he wished that he himself might visit the Holy Land, she showed him the worst of all: not because it was slaughter or disaster on a grand scale, but because it was as real as if it had actually happened: Tub's body, stiff and white, drained of life, laid on the turf beside the millpond. He could see that Tub's dark hair was wet. When he asked Morgana, she said Tub would have drowned in Arthur's absence, but that Arthur would somehow prevent the accident—if he stayed. That much the Law freely revealed.

It went on through the night. When the Moon was high they were called for dinner. Walking quietly they returned to the house together, looking for all the world like friends—almost, in fact, with the familiarity of brother and sister. Arthur felt a strange bond with her now, a bond he knew was invisible to all but the two of them, a joining darker and deeper than anything he'd ever felt for the people around him, whom he loved with all his heart. It came of his struggle with the great forces, with desire and law, with power and responsibility, fate and foresight—and it was rooted now in the depths of him. And though it had a sinister feel, there was also somehow a strength of something like joy in it. Her eyes when she glanced at him seemed less threatening. That confused him deeply—but he was growing too tired to think about it.

After the banquet they sat apart from everyone else and Arthur puzzled and wished until he could hardly stay awake. When he wished for magical powers, she spoke to him earnestly and quietly of a sorcerer's enemies, and of what must be done to protect oneself against them. When he wished for the Philosopher's Stone, she described the devastation of prices and values that would come of one man's possessing an unlimited supply of gold—much strange talk he couldn't understand. He did understand what she said about armies coming to take the gold away. And nothing happened when he wished for it—so he knew she was telling the truth.

On and on they went, until the last of the adults were ready for bed, Arthur's mother among them. She called them pleasantly but sleepily, reminding them that they'd been allowed to stay up very late on account of the visit, but that they must go upstairs now. Arthur wanted little more than to sink into his own warm bed, especially as the night had grown chilly, with the lingering winter still present in the air—but he knew he must make his wish, and that he would find no sleep until it was done. Morgana too looked drowsy. A wisp of brown hair had worked its way out from under her ivory fillet and lay awry against her milky forehead.

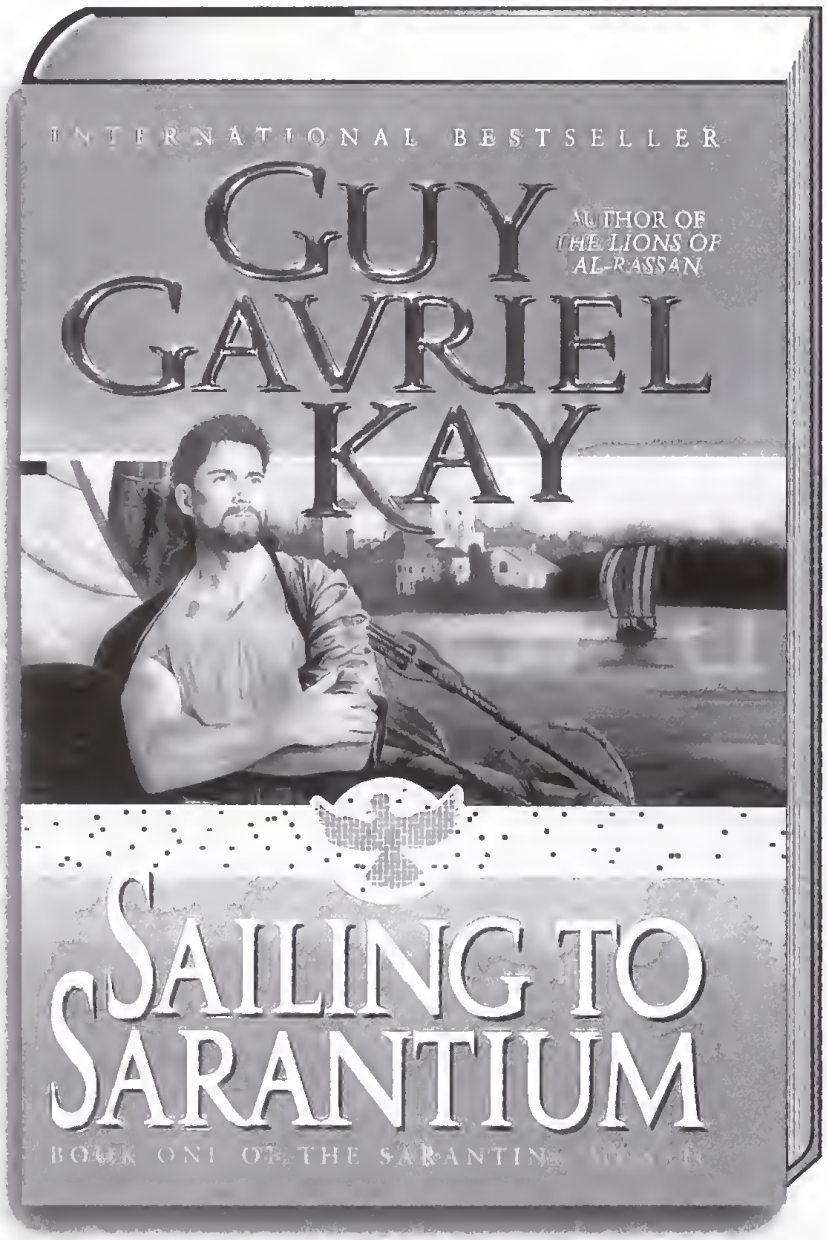
They paused together at the top of the stairs where they would have to part, making their separate ways to bedrooms at opposite ends of the hall. Morgana turned to him with a low laugh. The glow of torchlight against her face and heavy-lidded eyes made her look very beautiful, and Arthur felt again that unfamiliar longing, a desire vague yet somehow insistent. But he was too sleepy to pursue the thought.

"I told you," Morgana said scornfully. "You have the brains of a calf, though you fancy yourself a hero. Can you make no wish at all? Are we to be caught in this thing forever, you still gaping and the wish unmade?"

Continued on page 79

JUST ARRIVED FROM HARPERPRISM

THE MODERN MASTER OF FANTASY
presents
HIS LATEST WORK OF ART.



Not since Tolkien has a writer drawn so deeply from the well of myth to create vivid new worlds for his readers. Now Guy Gavriel Kay, the best-selling author of *The Lions of Al-Rassan* and *Tigana* returns with a spectacular, sweeping new historical fantasy that will delight his thousands of fans and create legions more, and is destined to become a modern fantasy classic.

HarperPrism
A Division of HarperCollins*Publishers*
http://www.harperprism.com

AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD.

Salvation is a slippery item. It can trickle through your fingers like water, if you can't find a safe place to keep it.

Baptism on Bittersweet CREEK

BY CHRISTOPHER ROWE
Illustration by Web Bryant

It was David Coffee and all that bunch that found the boy. David and four or five of those Dickersons and little Lowell Roy.

"I never saw nobody that was dead before," said one of the younger Dickersons.

The boys had been walking Bittersweet Creek since early, poking around newly fallen trees and kicking the fish that were still living out of shallow pools and back into the flow, the water still high after the storm.

This was the morning after spring had come on so hard in that country, with thunder and rain and lightning like nobody there had ever seen. David's mama had prayed all night and read

about the fountains of the deep being broke up, the windows of Heaven coming open.

They'd spotted the sprawled figure as they topped the rise where the creek flowed from its birthplace at the Cave Pool. "He must have got caught out in it last night."

The boys trotted up to the shore, careful to avoid the spray of stinking water thrown up by the sulfur waterfall that fell into the pool over the cave's mouth. The water flowing from the cave itself was falling back to the molasses crawl the boys were used to.

David finally spoke up. He said, "I don't reckon we know he's dead, yet."

It was still early enough in the year that he was wearing shoes; David kicked those off before he waded out. Their example set, the other boys followed.

The stranger lay on his back in the shallows over the mud bar that runs along the side of the pool where Brother Helm did his baptizing. The chill water lapped over his chest. His sharp chin and beak nose barely broke the surface.

They dragged him out of the water and lay him beneath one of the big hawthorns that rise on the banks on both sides of the cave mouth. The sulfur smell was strong from the waterfall and from the unconscious boy's clothes. "He'll have to throw them out," said Lowell.

"Ain't no kind of clothes anyway. What is that, his nightshirt?" The Dickerson that was asking fingered the white shift and stared down at the boy. His hair was coal black and long, his skin had an odd gold cast.

"That boy's afflicted with something, even if he ain't dead," said Lowell.

"Hush up," said David," I'm trying to hear if he's got any breath."

David leaned his ear right down against the slack face. The gold nostrils flared wide, then the eyes flew open. The stranger was on his feet and David was on his backside in the shallows before any of the other boys knew what was happening.

The boy was a lot taller than any of them, taller even than big Mr. Burton at the store, but he was a lot skinnier than Mr. Burton, too. He turned full around in odd little hops, keeping his shoulders and his eyes and his hips set the same direction. Those eyes were a new blue to all of them.

He spied out the pool and the falls and the cave and the flabbergasted boys. He gave each of them a queer stare and then cocked his head sideways like a whitetail that's caught a sound on the wind.

Then he whistled.

He whistled like wind or like smoke. He whistled like icicles falling off the fluff or like a lightning strike. It wasn't like any kind of music they'd ever heard, but they knew that's what it was, music.

Little Lowell and the youngest Dickerson clapped their hands over their ears. The older boys winced. Their gasps were the first sounds they'd made since the boy leaped up, and those were only audible because the haunting whistle died off.

The stranger had raised his arms up and out while he made his music. He'd pointed his chin at the sky and closed those blue eyes.

Now he dropped his arms, and his face, which wore something like a recognizable expression, finally. A quizzical expression.

The boys, even David, continued to keep still and silent, scared. The stranger did his hop around again, casting his eyes over the sopping ground, over the surrounding trees and bushes that were just coming on green.

He bent straight out over from the waist and snatched up a busted chert rock. The sky was still grayed over so the crystal shards at its center didn't sparkle.

He touched his tongue to and twisted the rock. He hissed.

Then he opened his mouth. Blood flowed out over his chin, red over gold. He set his shoulders toward the cave and trotted toward it, through the water. And as he went, he sang.

The sounds were the same, but this time he laid a melody into it, crazy sharps pushed together in a high, earthy tremor. The rest of the boys joined David on the ground.

And with that coming out of him, he pulled his feet up and tucked his chin to his chest. He fell, twisting, between the two old hawthorns, through the sulfur curtain, into the cave.

The top of his head smacked the damp limestone wall hard enough to hear through the waterfall. He folded to the floor, this time face down in the water.

Nobody said anything for a long minute. They hadn't noticed that the blue jays had stopped fussing until they started up again.

Then David said, "That boy *is* afflicted."

Some of them stripped off their clothes to keep the stink of the falls off and pulled the boy up onto the bank again. They rigged up a sledge out of elm branches and Dickerson shirts and laid the still form across it. He had a bump the size of a hen's egg on the top of his head and his face was as much green as gold now.

BITTERSWEET CREEK WAS THE ONLY THING like a road anywhere around there, so the only place to drag him was downstream. He was heavier than he looked.

The light and their bellies told them it was close to noon by the time they reached the Sapps, who had the first place below the Cave Pool.

Sister Ruth was coming up from the cellar with her apron full of seed potatoes when she saw them. She rolled the roots into a wash tub and shouted to the boys, "Bring him up to the porch."

She ducked into the house and the boys eased their burden onto the wooden floor of the deep front porch. One of the Sapps' old hounds, Bundle, roused up and tried to clean the dried blood off the boy's face but David shooed her away.

Sister Ruth came out of the house, loaded down with a basin of water and some cotton rags. She cleared a path through the boys and dogs to stand by David.

"Well, David, who does that one belong to? When I saw y'all coming down the creek I just knew one of you wild fools had finally fell off the top of the bluff."

"We found him up at the pool, ma'am. None of us ever laid eyes on him until this morning. You watch him, though, he's afflicted."

"I'll watch *over* him, I reckon, but I'll leave judgment with the Old Maker, which is where you'd do well to leave it, too, David Coffee." Sister Ruth taught the boys' Sunday School class.

"Lowell, Mr. Sapp is on top of the hill checking his beef herd, run fetch him. David, you head down to the church and bring Brother Helm. Ask him to bring his mules against us having to take this one to see that nurse at Stone's Camp. You other boys, there's some good lye soap on the flat rocks across the creek. I'll not send you home smelling like old eggs and catch the rough side of Sarah Dickerson's tongue on Sunday."

The boys scattered.

Hiram Sapp's cattle had knocked down their barbed wire in the storm so it was a chore for Lowell to find him. By the time the two of them had got the herd up and came back down the hill Sister Ruth had fed the Dickersons and sent them home. Brother Helm was turning out of the creek perched atop his riding mule, Shadrach. David was walking along behind with Meshach on a lead.

Sister Ruth led her husband and her pastor to the big middle room of the house where she had the boy laid out on a double fold of quilt next to the fireplace. She'd dressed him in some old thing of Hiram's.

"His breathing's a lot better than when they brought him down. He took a nasty knock if what Sarah's boys told me is right. Half of what they said didn't make any kind of sense."

"I'm sure I don't know the boy," said Brother Helm, "but I suppose he could be from over at Willow Ridge. I see Brother Simms from the New Hope Chapel up there now and then. He's never said anything about a yellow boy, though."

"His eyes are fluttering like he's working on coming to," rumbled Mr. Sapp. Hiram Sapp's bass had some gravel in it since he'd gone

gray, but he could still make the floorboards rumble. "Maybe he'll tell us where he's from himself."

The three of them saw that new blue.

The boy's eyes took in the room and the people in it, scattershot. His head and shoulders jumped every direction as he struggled up off the floor.

"Now, child—" said Sister Ruth, but she stopped when the boy gained his feet and began spinning around. He was taller than either of the men and showed it by throwing his arms up and frantically scratching at the ceiling.

The two men tried to take hold of him, but he slipped their grasp and bounded to the nearest wall. He crashed into it, rattling Sister Ruth's sepia ancestors in their frames, then bounced to the next wall, then the next. He was across the hearth as fast as a cat and came at last to the lone window, where a shaft of weak sunlight fought through the heavy curtains. He leaned down and followed the light to the glass with his nose and mouth and when he had batted the curtains down they could all see the blurred outside. The boy crashed through the window in a storm of noise and wavy glass.

Sister Ruth stood looking at the shattered remnants of the window her father had traveled all the way to Louisville to buy over 50 years before. Her husband scooted past her.

"Boy's crazy or something," he said.

David and Lowell had been sitting on the porch, trying to keep the pintos and cornbread Sister Ruth had given them from the dogs. Now they were standing down in front of the porch, staring up into the big walnut tree hard by the side of the house.

Their elders joined them. The boy was 20 feet up the black trunk, bleeding in a dozen places. His head was jerking around, drawing lines.

"Looks like he's drawing the house with that chin of his," said Mr. Sapp.

"Well, get him down, Hiram. The boy's cut all over and scared to death besides."

"I don't know how we'll get him down without scaring him even worse," said Brother Helm. "I'm afraid that young man was set wrong even before he hit his head."

One of the boys spoke from behind them. "He likes singing."

They turned.

"Lowell's right," said David. "He was doing some kind of singing when he came to up at the pool."

"Some of these poor folks can be calmed that way, like cattle," said Brother Helm. "Or at least I've heard of that."

He crossed into the blackened skirt of ground where the walnut had eaten up everything around it. He raised his voice some.

"How about it, son? Are you such that handle the harp and organ like old Jubal? David, why don't you pitch 'When I See the Blood'?"

So it went like a Sunday, because Brother Helm knew that David could hit that note as pure as the pitch pipe every time.

They all sang:

Christ the Redeemer died on the cross,
Died for the sinner,
Paid all His due,

Brother Helm always led.

All who receive Him need never fear,
Yes, He will pass,
Will pass over you.

The boys didn't have their tenors yet, so they sang unison on the lead. Sister Ruth had an old-lady soprano but she knew just what she could do with it. And Hiram Sapp, he picked up in the chorus from down in a well …

When I
(When I)
See the blood
(See the blood)
I will pass, I will pass over you …

"Over you …" finished Mr. Sapp.

The boy in the tree had glued himself to the song from the first note. When Mr. Sapp's last bass phrase finally rolled down the creek, he narrowed his eyes so much it looked like he was going to close them up again. Then he flipped around the branch and dropped the 20 feet to the ground as light as a water bug would step onto the creek.

Sister Ruth cried out and started forward, expecting to have at least a broken leg to deal with on top of the cracked hand and the jaundice or whatever it was. But the boy was standing beside Brother Helm, calm.

There was a hum or a buzz coming from the back of his throat.

"He's singing the song," said Brother Helm. "I don't know if he's from Willow Ridge or not, but he's been to church somewhere."

IT WAS DECIDED THAT BROTHER HELM WOULD RIDE TO Stone's Camp in the morning with a letter for the sheriff in Jericho, the county seat. The boy would stay at the Sapps' until word came on what to do with him.

Brother Helm hoisted Lowell up onto Shadrach behind David. The boys had had an even more tiresome day than usual and the preacher was taking them home.

"We're doing the Lord's work with this poor young man, folks. We're doing unto the least of these."

The Sapps managed to coax the boy off the porch where he'd sat through the leave-taking. He kept walking back and forth just under the lip of the roof, watching the sky the whole time. Then he hesitated at the door for a long while.

Finally, he came in and made for the freshly swept floor beneath the shattered window like Bundle making for her spot by the fireplace.

He wouldn't come to the supper table, though, and didn't touch any of the food Ruth set before him on the floor except to nibble on some cornbread. He kept staring at the darkening sky through the window and running his fingers back and forth on the bowed oak floorboards.

After supper, dishes done, Ruth and Hiram pulled chairs next to the window. It was their old habit evenings for Ruth to sit and work with her hands—sewing this early in the year, later she would shell beans—while Hiram read aloud from one of the Gospels or from Acts. Sometimes he'd read a war story from the Old Testament.

Tonight, though, Ruth felt like they should make their guest feel at home, introduce themselves.

"My daddy built this place when he came back from the War Between the States. Do you know about that?"

The boy didn't answer, but kept following the wood grain with his fingers. Every once in a while, he would put his cupped hand to his ear and cock his head toward the floor.

"He came back and told Mama that he never wanted to hear another loud sound in his life unless it was fiddles or people laughing. I don't guess he did, either, did he, Hiram?"

"Not that I ever heard of," said Hiram.

"But fiddling and singing, well, he heard those all right. And people dancing and laughing. Folks would come to this house from all over Cane County. All those men back from the war would play songs they learned while they were off away and the people would dance until daylight. That's the way I remember it from when I was a little girl, anyway."

"That's what folks always said," said Hiram.

The boy moved his fingers from the floor to his ear again.

"That's why the floor in here is bent down so," said Ruth, "it's from the dancing."

That hum started rising in the back of his throat again, snatches of something.

"Now, what is that?" wondered Ruth.
"Why, that's one of those old songs, Ruth. You know it."
Hiram slapped the time on his knee and sang:

Put Your loving arms all around me,
Prop every leaning side,
Every humble knee, surely must bow,
Surely must bow.

Ruth remembered, she could hear the raucous strings and joined in:

Well You said You'd be a mother for the motherless,
You said You'd be a father for the fatherless, too,
You said if I would serve You,
You'd be my father, too.

The boy didn't use any words, and the part he dropped in didn't quite fit the harmony, but he had the high tempo right. Ruth laughed and said, "Well how about that? That's the closest I've come to being out of breath from singing in a long while."

They couldn't get him to lay down on the pallet they fixed, or even to stay inside much longer. He went out to the porch with the younger dogs, but whether he slept or not they couldn't say.

BITTERSWEET FLOWS INTO THE RIVER 10 miles above Stone's Camp. Burton's Store sat on the bank there. Mr. Burton sold salt and flour and cloth.

All the old men and tale-tellers in that county gathered at the store. It was summertime, so they were leaning back in cane-bottom chairs in the shade of the eaves. One or two had cedar shanks, worrying over them with pocket knives.

The shade wasn't helping much around noon, when Japheth Sapp came up the river. "I was coming across that ford and an old catfish swam right out after me," he said.

The old men knew Japheth. One of them said, "It's humid, all right."

"Humid is right, sir. I had to cut me a switch and beat him back down to the river. I figured y'all would have heard him screeching all the way up here."

Mr. Burton was fanning himself with an old newspaper. "Is that what all that carrying on was?" he asked. "We figured it was your brother the crow and his wife, raising a ruckus on account you outcawed him."

Japheth laughed. "I am kin to crows, gents, but they're not the kin I'm up this way to see. I aim to head up the creek and see my old cousin Hiram and his bride."

"Come to see that boy of theirs?" asked another old man, puffing at a pipe.

"Boy? Sap didn't run out that branch of our tree, sir, unless the Lord's sent Hagar up Bittersweet."

"Floated a basket into the bullrushes is more like I heard it," said Mr. Burton. "But sure they've heard about Esau Sapp at Stone's Camp, what with that sheriff coming up from Jericho. Sure you've heard about Sister Ruth's wild foundling."

"Foundling is it? No, sir, that's one I've not heard, nor anything about the law being up this way. I've been down at Bowling Green since Christmas and before, loading trains."

Mr. Burton told him, "This boy washed up in the storm we had around here back at the start of spring. That was a queer thing. Wind liked to carry off every house on the creek that night, and it rained enough to make our poor stream like one of your steam engines. But there wasn't a drop fell down at the camp, and not at Willow Ridge, and not at Jericho, and not any other place we heard about.

The old man with the pipe said, "Some boys found this one they call Esau at the Cave Pool, and he's in the charge of your kin. Preacher Helm's wrote everybody in the commonwealth, I reckon, and nobody's come to claim him except that sheriff. He aimed to take the boy up to some kind of home at Frankfort. The boy is touched, if you take my meaning."

"I do, sir, I do," said Japheth. "But sure Hiram Sapp didn't fight off the law to keep a crazy boy. Our Ruth has longed after little ones for herself a long time now, but she's got better sense than that."

"Oh, she does," said Mr. Burton, "though she and Hiram look after the boy like he was their own flesh. It would have pained Sister Ruth to have her Esau took off, but she would have let him go if he would have gone."

"Did he hide in the bluffs, then?"

"Well, he *could* have, I reckon. He's up in them hills as much as he's among honest folk."

"... and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field," quoted another old man.

"That's right, that's right," agreed Mr. Burton. "That's the very verse they named him from. He's kept Sapps in venison and fish for pretty near four months, but they say nothing will pass his lips but what comes out of Sister Ruth's garden."

"That's a fine tale, sir," interrupted Japheth. "But that sheriff, now. My new cousin didn't kill him, did he?"

"Kill him? No, even if that man cussed and carried on like somebody had tried to. It was his horse the boy went after."

"Took the horse down bare handed, did he?" asked Japheth.

"Quit your joshing now, man, and let me finish. He didn't hurt the horse at all, he just sang to it."

"He don't sing words," said the pipe smoker.

"No, he don't," agreed Mr. Burton. "He's got hums and whistles and trills and all like every kind of bird you ever heard—and some you ain't, I'll wager—but he don't speak proper words, singing or not."

"The horse, sir," said Japheth.

"I'm getting there. That man came up as far as Stone's Camp in some kind of a car and then requisitioned him a horse off a poor soul down there.

"He rode up here—didn't even get down off the animal—and yelled in to me, said, 'Where do I find the lunatic?'"

"Lawmen eat that kind of talk right up," said Japheth, said it like he knew a little too well.

"I expect you can guess how that old pinch face took my fooling with him. He cussed me some and I heard 'Sapp' in there, so I sent him on the way.

"Now, I didn't see what happened when he got there—"

The pipe smoker spoke up again. "There's none here that did. Hiram and Sister Ruth and all that gang of kids was all that was there."

"And that bunch followed that man all the way back down the creek and halfway to the camp, I guess," said Mr. Burton. "When they came back up they stopped in here and told us the tale.

"Seems that man marched that prize pony up Bittersweet to Hiram Sapp's and took to hollering around there same as he did down here. Hiram was about the place, there, stacking cord wood or something, and the young ones were playing one of those queer singing games Esau's taught them.

"See, they've been trying to get that boy to talk since spring, and some time or another one of them hit on teaching him words one at a time. So they took to pointing things out to him and calling out what they were. Like if I was to point yonder and say 'sycamore,' or here at these and say 'ignorant old coots.'"

"They were bringing him things to sing for them," said the one old man who wasn't grumbling and spitting.

"That's what he does, see," said Mr. Burton. "He ain't learned any words, but he'll take what's brought to him and hold it up to his ear like he's listening to it. Then he'll trill out some nonsense or other."

"I heard him do it," said the pipe smoker. "It ain't just anything, though. He won't sing much that's made, if you get me. Not pocket knives or store-bought shoes or any kind of money. He sings creek

rocks and flowers, like that, mostly. He sang my good cob pipe, though, he sang it crackling and whistling."

"But as to that sheriff," continued Mr. Burton, glaring at the pipe smoker, "he was up there, said he'd come for the lunatic to take him off somewhere. And Hiram and Sister Ruth were all tore up over it I guess, but this man had papers said on them Esau was to go.

"And all that time, them kids were standing around tear-eyed and Sister Ruth was going around making the boy up a lunch or something to take with him, but young Esau was just leaning back on the ground like he does, listening to leaves, I guess."

"It was ginseng," said the pipe smoker. "It was some 'seng Hiram had dug."

Mr. Burton said, "He finally caught on that this man meant to do something with him, and do you know that that boy sauntered up to that horse and hummed at it? And do you know what that horse did?"

"It turned around and headed back down the creek," said the pipe smoker.

"It turned around and headed right back down that creek," Mr. Burton finished, smiling.

"Young man put a buzz in its ear, did he?" asked Japheth.

"Not just a buzz, no sir," said Mr. Burton, "not by a long shot."

"And not just that one young man, neither," said the pipe smoker, "not the way I heard it."

"That's right," said Mr. Burton. "That's right. See, this sheriff didn't care about no horse that wasn't his own, did he? He commenced to beating that animal and yelling and spurring and finally got it turned around back up into Sapp's yard, there."

"I expect old Hiram wasn't being too helpful to that man, knowing Hiram's ways," said Japheth. "But I know our Ruth's ways, too, and I've never known her to not render up to Caesar."

"That was told us, sir," said the pipe smoker. "I don't impugn your word. But it says in the Book, too, to reprove the ruthless and defend the orphan."

All of the old men nodded.

"I was saying that that man got his horse whipped back up into the yard. Well, the boy just sang at it again and there it went, right back down the creek. And that sheriff whipped on that poor animal merciless and got it stopped. It wouldn't turn around though.

"Now, do you know those Coffees that live at the cane bottom three miles up?

"I knew old Barnabas Coffee that taught the singing schools around here when I was a lad. He called me out proper for singing 'dedun Christ' instead of 'dead in Christ.'" Japheth's voice took on a round, mellow baritone. "'E-nun-see-ate, Master Sapp. I will not 'mechew' in the sweet by and by and I scarcely expect to 'meet you' there, either, if you don't mend your ways.'"

There was raspy gray laughter, and Mr. Burton said, "That was Brother Coffee, all right. The one who lives up here now is his son, and it's his son, young David, that's the chief rascal on our creek. But he's got a better ear for a tune than even his granddaddy did, and it's him that all the little ones follow after.

"It was this David that sang the horse back down the creek. I reckon Esau slipped off or something. He wasn't around no ways when that bunch came down the creek, jeering that sheriff and feeding the horse apples.

"The sheriff had lost his voice from yelling at the children, but there was such a pack of them and they was carrying on so I think it was fear calmed him more than anything. He just rode along, and if he ever stirred, well David was right behind with a buzz in his throat.

"We haven't heard back from the man, neither."

"Sounds like this Esau is the very thing with the young ones," said Japheth.

"More with them than with some of their folks is my understanding of the matter," said Mr. Burton.

"He's the hellion, is he?" asked Japheth.

"Well, there's some say he is and there's some say he ain't. It don't help matters that he won't set foot in Preacher Helm's church."

"He won't go inside nowhere," said the pipe smoker, "except for Hiram's house a little. And that cave at the top of the creek if you call that inside."

"The ladies sure do cluck that Sister Ruth can't get him in the church is all I know," continued Mr. Burton. "It's caused her some grief, but the boy at least does go *to* the church."

"Just not inside it," said Japheth.

"That's right, sir. He props himself up against the post oak outside the colored glass through the whole service. They say it's the only time he listens to what people have to say."

"He's listening to the singing, not the saying," said the pipe smoker. "I step out there some mornings. All through the sermoning and such he's just sitting staring off and humming like he is most times. But when Brother Helm has David give the pitch for a hymn, that Esau turns his whole self toward that window and just leans into the singing."

It was getting late, and Japheth still had the whole length of the creek to walk. He rose, and said, "Well, gents, that was a lot to tell about one boy."

All the old men nodded when Mr. Burton said, "Oh, that ain't all by half."

FARMING ON BITTERSWEET IS HARD SCRATCH farming. Besides livestock, there's some corn in the bottoms. The money comes from tobacco but it's not enough, so the people garden and hunt some, and fish. In the summer, the children pick blackberries.

The Coffees had their three out, David and his sisters, one older and one younger. Lowell was along, too, and the boys grudged this time, time they would usually be spending at the cave with Esau and some other boys.

But none of them were at the Cave Pool that day. It was clear and fine, good weather for picking the berries, so most of the young ones around there were on the hills, carrying metal pails.

Esau greeted those children he met. He was making the long circuit of the valley carved by the creek. He ran along the hilltops and hollows. He sipped water from streams and blackberry wine from a clay jar he found hidden in a spring house.

When he came across David and Lowell, he whistled their tunes. There were no songs for the girls; Esau only named people that came to the pool. Girls around there didn't run the woods with their brothers.

"I dug up some more 'seng, Esau," said David. "But Daddy found it and laid it up himself. I might be able to sneak it before the man comes to Burton's buying. It'll dry out better in our shed than up at the cave, anyhow."

The boys could never tell if Esau understood what they said, really. They'd gotten used to his ways, though, being around him so much.

David's sisters weren't used to the strange boy, though. The younger kept looking from Esau to David to the way home, her eyes big in her head. The older girl, Miriam, set her eyes to her work and made out like she was studying on each berry before she plucked it.

She was studying the berries too hard and the brambles not enough, though. Just as Lowell was saying how he'd heard there were some folks trying to get the Willow Ridge school going again, she sunk a thorn into her thumb and let out an "Oh!"

Esau had been drifting off like he did, just kind of easing into the trees. When Miriam hit that C sharp, though, he turned toward her. He set his shoulders and his eyes and his nose toward her. The littler girl's lip started trembling.

David and Lowell let their talk die off as Esau walked over to the silent older girl. She was as wide-eyed as her sister, her thumb stuck in her mouth. Esau wrapped his long fingers around her wrist. Her thumb came out of her mouth with a pop.

The sound made the boys laugh, then the girls, too. Miriam's laughter was nervous, though.

"He won't hurt you none, Miriam," said David.

Esau was staring at the blood on the girl's thumb, smelling it. Then he dropped her hand and bounded over to Lowell. Esau touched the boy at his temple, then dragged a fingernail along his scalp.

The boy gasped as Esau was across the way to Miriam again. He had to leap over the spilled bucket of blackberries the younger girl had dropped when she saw the rill of blood flow over Lowell's cheek.

Miriam stood stock still as Esau took up her hand again. His eyes and nose went from her thumb to the nails of his other hand.

David said, "Now, Esau—" and Esau didn't turn to look at him but growled out some low noise. David fell silent.

Esau put his hands on the girl's shoulders and pushed her out to arms length. He looked her up and down slowly, taking in the hint of roundness in her chest and the way her wool skirt flared out over her hips.

He spun on Lowell again, stared at him hard again, hard like that first morning. And then the same to David.

He cocked his head sideways, like he did sometimes.

He didn't say it like a word, but the children recognized Miriam's "Oh!" when Esau sang it. He fixed on her again.

"Sing out that B, Miriam," said David.

Lowell was running his hand over his head, making sure the bleeding wasn't bad. He said, "That's how he makes friends. We all sing to him."

Of course the girl could sing, she was as much a Coffee as her brother, but she broke on the note. Esau jerked his head toward David.

David sang:

When the trumpet of Lord shall sound,
And time shall be no more …

That was just about his sister's favorite song. Lowell came in on the high part.

And the morning breaks eternal
Bright and fair,

And Miriam jumped into the lead, because she could hold those high notes so sweet. David and Lowell followed after her.

When the saved of earth shall gather,
Over on the other shore,

Esau never nodded or gave out anything like a smile. But they could tell he was pleased with something, they could tell it because he joined in, with his odd disharmonies.

When the roll is called up yonder
I'll be there.

And after that there were girls, too, up at the Cave Pool.

LOWELL HAD HEARD IT RIGHT ABOUT THE SCHOOL AT WILLOW Ridge. The county sent a man up there and boarded him with some Keltners. He had the school cleaned up and the word out before the weather turned harsh.

There were about 20 along the creek that were expected to trek up over the bluff line and on to the school. There were easy ways to Willow Ridge from Bittersweet and there were quick ways. One of the quick ways was up behind the Cave Pool, so there were a lot of days that the scholars didn't make it all the way to that man's school.

They joshed each other and kidded some and said that they were going to Esau's school, instead, and that his was a lot better. Esau's school was a singing school.

He didn't do it the way David's grandfather had in his day. He didn't have a chalkboard with the staff factory drawn on it. He didn't run them through their scales pointing a stick at triangles and ovals and squares.

They would just sit around under the hawthorns all day, in the fallen leaves, and every once in a while, somebody would call one out.

"I Need Thee!" one would call, and off they'd all go. One of the Dickersons was finally getting his bass so he would see how far down he could get when they sang "O bless me now, my Savior."

They sang "A Mighty Fortress is our God" and "I Will Praise Him" and "Take Up Thy Cross." They had Miriam Coffee do "I am Thine, O Lord" as a solo, she sang it so pretty.

During all of the songs, even during the special like "I am Thine" or when David would tap Lowell and another boy for a trio on "Are You Washed in the Blood?," Esau was catting about. He'd lean in next to a singer and put a note in her ear that didn't belong there. He'd join in on a chorus and twist it around somehow.

Finally, they started hearing something in his wrong-headed singing. Finally, they sang like him, some of the time.

They didn't forget proper singing, though. Come Sunday morning they were sopranos and tenors and a few altos and that one bass. But it caught up to them.

Brother Helm was leading "Standing on the Promises" one Sunday, and somewhere about the second chorus one of the little ones slipped in a trill. It kind of spread around among the scholars and by the time the congregation started in on the fourth verse, where it says "Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord," the children were singing a different song.

The congregation quieted even before Brother Helm chopped his hand across to signal a halt. Brother Helm had good ears and knew just which boy had hit the first wrong note. Brother Helm had worried parents in his flock and a letter from the schoolmaster at Willow Ridge in his coat pocket.

He asked the little one, "Who taught you such a noise, Silas?" The boy froze under all those eyes, but then all the eyes turned to David Coffee.

"That's just some singing like Esau does, sir," he said.

Brother Helm stepped from behind the lectern and walked the length of the sanctuary. He opened the door at the back of the church and leaned out to look toward the post oak. He leaned right back in though, because Esau Sapp had broke with his custom. Esau Sapp wasn't there.

SISTER RUTH POURED COFFEE FOR HIRAM AND for Brother Helm, then for herself. "I still don't see how he's doing anything wrong," she said.

"Now, Ruth," said Mr. Sapp, but Brother Helm said, "It's all right, Hiram." The preacher set his cup and saucer on the table.

"Ruth, I'm not here to give judgment. But there's some on the creek that are worried about their young ones. There's more than one down the way here who thinks that your Esau is leading some children astray somehow."

"What do they say the boy's been doing?" rumbled Hiram.

Brother Helm started to frame an answer, but Ruth interrupted. "They say he's been keeping the scholars from their books, even if Brother Helm has marched them all the way to the ridge every school morning since that letter come, and even if there's not one in 10 doing the complaining that can draw their own name."

Brother Helm started to speak again, but Sister Ruth kept going.

"They say he's teaching them heathen ways of singing, even if they do sing better than they ever did before on Sundays, and even if that queer music that rolls down from the cave is pretty."

The two men looked into their cups.

"They say that he leads them to sloth for staying up there at the pool so much, even if they all work twice as hard at their studying

and their chores so they have time to get up there and sing, them that aren't outright forbid it by now.

"They say he's a drunkard, though none have seen him act it. They say he's a thief, though not a thing's come up missing. They say I don't know what all."

Sister Ruth was crying some.

"They say he's no kind of family to me and you, Hiram, but he is. He was sent to us. I know he was sent."

Hiram Sapp, still confused by tears after over 40 years of marriage, patted his wife's hand. Brother Helm looked out the window for a little while.

"Sister Ruth, I know there are lies and false judgments against Esau," he said, when things had calmed some. "And I know the burden that's on me, too. I didn't come up here to ask you to bring the boy to heel. I came up here because that child is lost, Ruth, he is lost as sure as we are sitting here."

Ruth cried some more, but she and Hiram both nodded. "I know it," she said, "I know it."

"I've stood by half a year, we all have. I've prayed for him, though, and I know you have, too."

"I have," said Sister Ruth and Hiram was still nodding.

"The Lord wants to work through us. Didn't He ask us, 'What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?'"

"He did," said Hiram.

"Well, brethren, Esau is that sheep," continued the preacher, "and it is before us to lift him out of the pit. We must turn his face toward the light and his thoughts toward Heaven."

"That's right," said Sister Ruth.

"We'll show him the way to belief," said Brother Helm, "through our words and our deeds and our love, and through the love of the Redeemer. And if the Lord wills it, Esau will come to believe in Him, and he shall not perish, but have life everlasting."

"Amen," said Hiram, and Sister Ruth said, "Amen."

"HE'S READY TONIGHT," DAVID had said. "I guess he's been praying on it or something. He reckons tonight's the only night for it."

So Brother Helm had agreed. He sent David on down the creek to interrupt the Burtons at their supper and to roust out every other family on Bittersweet.

It was a deep, cold night. But even a bitter night in December is a fine night for a baptism.

The Burtons left their dishes on the table and so did the Dickersons. The flock of the Bittersweet church bundled themselves in coats and cloaks and scarves and started up the creek. Family by family, the congregation grew to its full number.

The creek was frozen over and the walking was treacherous. If any slipped and fell, though, there was always another there to catch them.

As they walked, they sang:

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away.

The Sapps waited at the Cave Pool, at the baptistry. Hiram had built a bonfire and was piling more wood on when they all topped the rise. They had heard his bass join their song even before they saw the light of the fire.

Sister Ruth was leaning over a kettle of cider, for after.

Esau paced the bank.

Brother Helm said, "There's the candidate!" and he was full of joy. All the women and children gathered around Hiram's fire.

The men had brought axes and now they went to work on the pool. It was frozen better than a foot down at the deepest part, at the part they had to clear.

The vapors of their breath floated in the moonlight, and as they worked, they sang:

Come, Thou Almighty King;
Help us Thy name to sing ...

And when all was ready, Brother Helm held out his hand to Esau and together they waded into the ice-choked pool. The cave was sealed behind a cage of frozen sulfur water.

"Let the candidate come forth," said Brother Helm, and the stranger waded a little closer.

The preacher said the words, and the people listened. He asked the questions and the boy nodded, a slow dip of the chin and then a sudden jerk up.

Then Brother Helm placed his arm behind the boy's back, and his hand behind the boy's neck.

And on the shore, David Coffee began to sing:

He will keep me til the river ...

Brother Helm stopped, because there was an odd timbre to the song. He looked at David and then at all the other children. The joy drained from his face.

Rolls its waters at my feet ...

Two dozen young hands reached into pockets and brought forth two dozen small grass sacks. When they were opened, a fine dry powder caught the slight breeze. The older people began murmuring, someone said, "Ginseng?"

The powder flowed onto the snow.

Then He'll bear me safely ...

Lowell Roy and Miriam Coffee broke away from the others. Steel flashed in firelight as they drew their daddies' hunting knives across their palms. A woman shouted out and the blood flowed onto the ice.

Over where the loved ones I shall meet ...

Brother Helm realized the boy was no longer beside him, but was wading toward the hidden cave. From somewhere back in all that ice, there was a flash of light brighter than the light from any fire Hiram Sapp could ever build.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story ...

All the young ones sang now, the familiar song cast into something different, something with crazy sharps pushed tightly together. Their voices blended in a high earthy tremor. The music flowed into the air.

Of the Christ who died for me ...

The stranger waded and pushed and scrambled toward the frozen waterfall, toward the lightning dancing in the ice.

Sing it with the saints in glory ...

He pulled his feet up and tucked his chin to his chest. He fell, twisting, between the two old hawthorns, through the icy sulfur curtain, through the frozen waterfall that wasn't there.

Gathered by the crystal sea.

And Esau Sapp was gone.

Take A Long Step

THE WALKER HAD been a god once. He would soon be one again, these things tending to be cyclical. He was already hearing voices. Not the average, everyday kill-strangers-for-no-good-reason voices. Real voices. Real people.

Soon he would even know what they were saying.

Now the voices were only murmurs in the distance, but they were getting louder by the day. Soon he would know what they wanted, dreamed, felt, *were*. What had happened before was going to happen again. He wasn't particularly happy about it. Walker did want to be ready, as far as possible, but there just wasn't a lot one could do to prepare for divinity.

Homeless, unemployed, he waited for his new time by walking the streets of Canemill on a regular route, almost never varying, his long skinny legs covering ground much faster than was really possible. His parents had thought him slow in the head, but he wasn't so much slow as quiet, listening to things they did not hear, not inclined to talk though he knew how.

Now his shoulders were always hunched, eyes looking at the ground as if he did not wish to see anyone, but he saw everyone. Sometimes he would break into a run for no reason that anyone could tell, but there was always a reason. Always.

Take a long step from trouble, take a long step from pain. Walk the streets forever lest it catch you up again.

Walker wasn't satisfied with the rhyme. The relationship between "pain" and "again" only worked when he twisted the accents in a way that sounded unnatural even to him. Too many things about the world were unnatural as it was, and that without considering sex at all. No reason for him to deal with that particular can of omelettes and sperm before necessary. He just kept walking as long as he could. When he had to stop, he stopped, and waited until it was time to walk again. Not that he thought it mattered. Sooner or later divinity was bound to catch up with him.

I wish it was up to me…

No matter how much we want to stop the ***Wheel*** *from turning, there is* ***nothing*** *in the* ***universe*** *to put between its* ***spokes.***

By Richard Par

Illustration by Michael

Will there be an - y stars, an - y stars in my crow
bod - y needs you, needs you to - day,
the Shepherd of
raptured soul shall find Rest
Some
Loud -
ks
Gibb
WHY IS EVERYBODY SINGING

Walker turned onto Liam Street. It was a good street, narrow, but there were few homes and too much traffic. Large water oaks shaded the asphalt from the August sun; the air was cool and still and smelled faintly of earth. The hint of wildness in the overgrown lots alongside it made him almost want to stop, but he didn't dare. Not yet.

As he walked past Strangfellow's Funeral Home he stumbled, then felt a sudden cool breeze where there shouldn't have been one. He looked down, saw the tattered remnants of his right sneaker lying a good two feet behind him. The last scrap of cloth holding the laces together had finally given out. Walker looked at the ruins, sighed deeply, and started walking again. His pace was a little uneven now that his legs were no longer quite the same length, and he found himself watching the ground even closer than before, keeping an eye out for glass.

HER ARMS ACHING, LIDDY ASHFORD LOADED the last of the laundry into the camper on her husband's pickup, then slid behind the wheel. She reached for the keys, then looked at her husband's hunting boots sitting on the passenger floor of the pickup.

Oh, no, Mel. Not this time.

Mel always started this way, weeks before the season. First the boots casually left on the floorboard; later a box of Remingtons in the glove compartment; in a few days, the camo vest draped over the seat. By the time deer season was officially open he would be all packed, then it was off to the deer camp for three days or more, using precious vacation time to drink beer in the woods with his buddies, away from her.

Does the silly bastard actually think I wouldn't notice?

She'd borrowed the pickup to go to the laundromat. Washed his dirty clothes, just as she cleaned his dirty house and had for 12 years now. If there was any free time to be had, she wanted her share. And *this* year, damn his hide, he was going to give it to her, and if he thought otherwise he was going to get that fight he was always trying to avoid by sneaking in his packing a little at a time.

Unless... It's not too bad a plan, to tell the truth. Let's see if I can use it too.

Liddy looked at the boots. If both disappeared, he'd accuse her of taking them. That was both. What about one? One was an accident. One boot left was unfortunate. One meant Mel shopping for a new pair with Liddy, because he was worse than useless when it came to buying clothes of any kind, including hunting attire. A pair of boots was trouble of the right sort. Liddy felt ready for a little trouble, but one boot was better. One boot was fraught with possibilities. One boot seemed—there was no other word that fit—*right*.

Liddy started the truck and pulled out of the laundromat. When she passed the corner of Liam & Lee, she reached down and tossed the right boot out the passenger side window. She was still grinning when she got home, but Mel didn't ask. He didn't want to know, which was really too bad; he was soon to discover that he didn't have much choice.

ONE BOOT.

Walker considered the piece of footwear lying beside the road with dread. Was it happening already? He didn't know. The boot could be just that—a boot that someone lost. But... what if it hadn't been lost? What if it had been placed there, specifically placed there for *him*. Not so simple as a man without a shoe finding a shoe. Providence, or luck, was all that amounted to. What if this was a chain of effect that, unlike blind luck, specifically had him in mind? That would be something else. That would be something very serious. Still, there wasn't much he could do about it one way or another. And he did need a shoe.

Walker tried it on. It fit perfectly.

Of course.

Too many things about the world were unnatural as it was, and that without considering sex at all.

JOHNNIE RAY WAS A WALKER TOO, BUT that's not all he was. There was no virtue in his variety so far as he could see, and there was a purity about Walker that Johnnie lacked. He wasn't jealous of Walker, exactly, but he felt a connection that he didn't like. A contrast, as if Walker were one thing and Johnnie was a mere shadow of it, no more. Or less. A shadow that was, however, growing stronger. He would go where Walker went because, being a shadow, he really didn't have a choice.

Johnnie wasn't homeless. He got a small check every month from the government, though he didn't know why. Something to do with service in a war he did not remember. Perhaps it was a mistake, but Johnnie didn't question. It paid for a small place on the less posh side of town. He did not work because that was not possible. He walked because there was nothing else to do. He bummed cigarettes when he could; he wished for them when he couldn't. The wished cigarettes hadn't appeared yet. Soon, he thought. Very soon.

THESE DAMN THINGS ARE KILLING ME.

John E. Waller had said the same thing every day for the past 10 years. At 47, he found himself involved in the common pursuit of men his age—explaining his mortality. He didn't sleep well more and more often; morning brought aches and stiffness that used to need a hard day at the mill to explain. It was as if pain had just found a home and settled there. He wasn't that old, he told himself. He exercised, he ate right. Mostly.

John stared at the cigarette pack when he stopped at the light on Northridge. Unfiltered, the same brand his grandfather had smoked. Matthew Waller was a great old guy and John had loved him more than any relative before or since. But maybe he'd taken the adulation too far.

He died of a massive everything, according to Doc Patterson. "Couldn't have done a damn thing if I'd been right there," he said. Hell, he was only 53.

Once that had seemed ancient but now, as John came within spitting distance of that age himself, it didn't seem old at all. Certainly far too soon to be finished with a life. There was still so much to do. See his own grandchildren, for one. His son Estes had given them the news barely a week before, and John was still trying to get his head around it.

"I'm going to be a grandfather," he said softly.

If he lived long enough to see it. John took one last look at the pack, balancing the need for one thing with the need for something else and suddenly, for the first time, the balance turned. The light changed and John turned right on Broken Elm, watching the traffic.

He was only vaguely aware that he'd thrown the nearly full pack out the window somewhere between Liam & Meadowview; he only knew that he didn't have it anymore.

Which was fine with him.

"DAMN."

It didn't help. Johnnie Ray swore with more invective and color then, rising to a crescendo of profanity that was something close to art. Little changed. He felt a welling anger that he did not like but could not stop. He knew it did not come from himself and that made it worse.

The pack of cigarettes—his favorite brand—still lay on the grass beside Liam. Johnnie Ray didn't kid himself that the pack was empty, mere litter. He knew better. Johnnie Ray started to walk away, but there was no point. He could refuse them if he wanted to; that was a separate thing altogether. He couldn't change the fact that they were there.

Johnnie Ray picked up the cigarettes and noted with disgust that the pack was almost full. He pulled one out and lit it. He pulled in the aromatic smoke, sighed with a mixture of content and despair as the nicotine and all the little carcinogens danced in his lungs. He savored the taste and scent of it for a moment, and then blew one perfect smoke ring.

Try as he might, he'd never been able to do that before.

"The Wheel is turning. Time to talk to the Walker, I do reckon," Johnnie said, and sighed again. It was inevitable now, but that didn't mean he was looking forward to it. Probably futile, too, but that didn't mean he was excused from trying. Regret was coming for him one way or another. No reason to add to the burden.

WALKER NOTICED THE MAN FOLlowing him, mostly because the man was silent. Not that he didn't make the ordinary noises: He whistled a tune that Walker almost recognized; his shoes crunched on the rocks and dried leaves on the shoulder of the street. No, it was the vast and profound *silence* of him amid the babble in Walker's head. From the man following him, Walker heard nothing. It was almost enough to make him stop. Instead, he started singing again. Aloud, this time.

"Take a long walk from trouble, take a long walk from pain. Walk the streets forever lest it catch you up again."

"That's wrong, you know. Trouble will catch you no matter how fast you walk. I know, Walker. Better than you."

Walker went faster. His legs moved in impossibly long strides, as if he wore seven-league boots from the fairy tale. Huge old trees loomed to left and right to disappear behind him in a blur of green and shadow, cars and people flashed by at random, oblivious. Walker walked faster than he ever had but the presence that followed kept right on his heels.

"We need to talk, Walker," his shadow said.

There could be no talk. Especially now. Walker stretched out. Cities flashed by, then rivers and oceans. Walker was afraid of how fast he traveled now, but he did not stop. He was afraid to stop.

"You're only making it worse; don't you know that?"

Walker had trouble with words that weren't a song. Songs were incantations of a sort, ritual and fixed; easier to deal with. As a human he needed it little, but now he was becoming something very different. He forced something like communication through his brain, arranged the neurons just *so*, watched the interesting patterns for a time that could not have been long, fractions of a second perhaps, then pushed the words out onto the crackling, howling wind that was the mark of their passage.

"Making… what, worse?"

"The mess we're in," Johnnie Ray said. "You know what's happening, don't you?" When Walker nodded, Johnnie Ray went on. "Do you know who I am?"

"No."

"I'm your shadow. That's why I'm here, why I'll *be* here, no matter where you go or how fast or how far. Hide in the light and I'll be there, hide in darkness and I'll be *everywhere*. Whenever your time comes, so does mine. I hate it."

Walker wasn't convinced. He walked faster. He wouldn't have thought it possible, but he did it. Continents flashed by, then—when the Earth could no longer contain his speed—planets and stars. He saw the void and knew it, but felt neither hot nor cold. He walked on what he did not know, but it didn't matter. He bestrode galaxies and saw the place of his birth reduced to a pinkling of light on the arms of a vast pinwheel of stars, and still the man was there. His shadow.

Walker stopped. He stood in darkness with the fires of stars all around, and arranged the part of himself that needed to be changed. Beyond simple speech. He needed to understand, and so he became a being capable of understanding. As a human he was almost feebleminded, or so his parents had said. Not good for anything. He still wasn't good for anything, to his way of thinking. But feebleminded he was not, then or now. Especially now.

"I know you. What do you want?" he asked.

The man moved closer.

"I want to end this thing."

"It has barely begun."

The man nodded. "Even more reason to act now. What do *you* hear?"

"Voices," Walker said. "What do *you* hear?"

The shadow man laughed. "I hear nothing. I *feel*, and that's far worse."

Walker increased his understanding. It was a simple matter now, but no matter how much greater his intellect grew it didn't seem to help. Expand though he did, there seemed little sense in what the other man… Johnnie Ray?… said. He admitted defeat. He wondered if he'd be able to do as much so easily later. He even wondered if this was a failing. "I don't understand."

"They will sing to you," Johnnie said. "Your former shell was somewhat limited; the memory may not still be in you, but that is what will happen: They will sing."

"That does not sound so terrible."

Johnnie Ray smiled. "It's not. But it doesn't end there. It never does. Next come the prayers, and you're the focus of all hope. Next come the disagreements, and all sides will call your name as they pull the trigger or swing the ax. You'll be responsible, and you will hear every last one."

"No," said Walker. It was a weak, pathetic sound.

"Yes," said Johnnie Ray. "But, bad as that is, let me tell you what's worse—the anger. You start with songs. How does it begin for me? Rage. Envy. Jealousy. Everything they struggle against in the dark and fail to beat? That's me. They will blame you for *letting* them fail. They'll blame me for *making* them fail. I'll be the source of a million troubles and feel every one of them.

"*Feel* them. Make your brain as large as a galaxy and you still won't know what that means. I say no, Walker."

"It is inevitable," Walker said. There may have been a hint of despair in his voice as it drifted with the dust of countless years, but there was no uncertainty.

Johnnie Ray shrugged. "So? Does that mean it has to happen *now*?"

Walker shook his head. "Now, or then? All the same, sooner or later."

"Not to me," Johnnie Ray said, softly. "You just walk and wait, but me? I had a life. Oh, I'll grant you rightly it wasn't *much* of a life. I can't work and I'm barely tolerated but, every now and then, good things would come to me and I had the sense to enjoy them. When this thing happens all that will be gone, and it will be gone for a very long time. All time may be equal, perhaps. All time is not the same."

Continued on page 72

Below: Stephen Youll brings a pre-Raphaelite look into the fantasy court of George R.R. Martin's *Clash of the Kings.*

THE SECRETS In The Shadows

STEPHEN YOULL

By Karen Haber

Stephen Youll sees things that most people don't: A dragon leaping over turquoise clouds into yellow skies. Fierce Sabre-toothed cats ridden by equally ferocious women. Green serpents erupting out of perpendicular seas.

Of course, as a professional artist, he's expected—and paid—to see these things. But when he's off-duty his artistic vision doesn't shut down. "I've learned not to tell too many other people what I see," he says. "They just look at me funny. But I do think that artists may see colors more richly, more strongly. I can go outside and see something amazing, something beautiful, even on the murkiest day. You can get so much out of just looking at the sky."

Youll's bravura renderings of his vivid visions have paid off handsomely with commissions from major publishers like Bantam, Warner, Avon, Ballantine, Penguin, and other clients including DC Comics, IBM Corporation, and Hamilton Plates, and awards from the Association of Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists, the Society of Illustrators, and others.

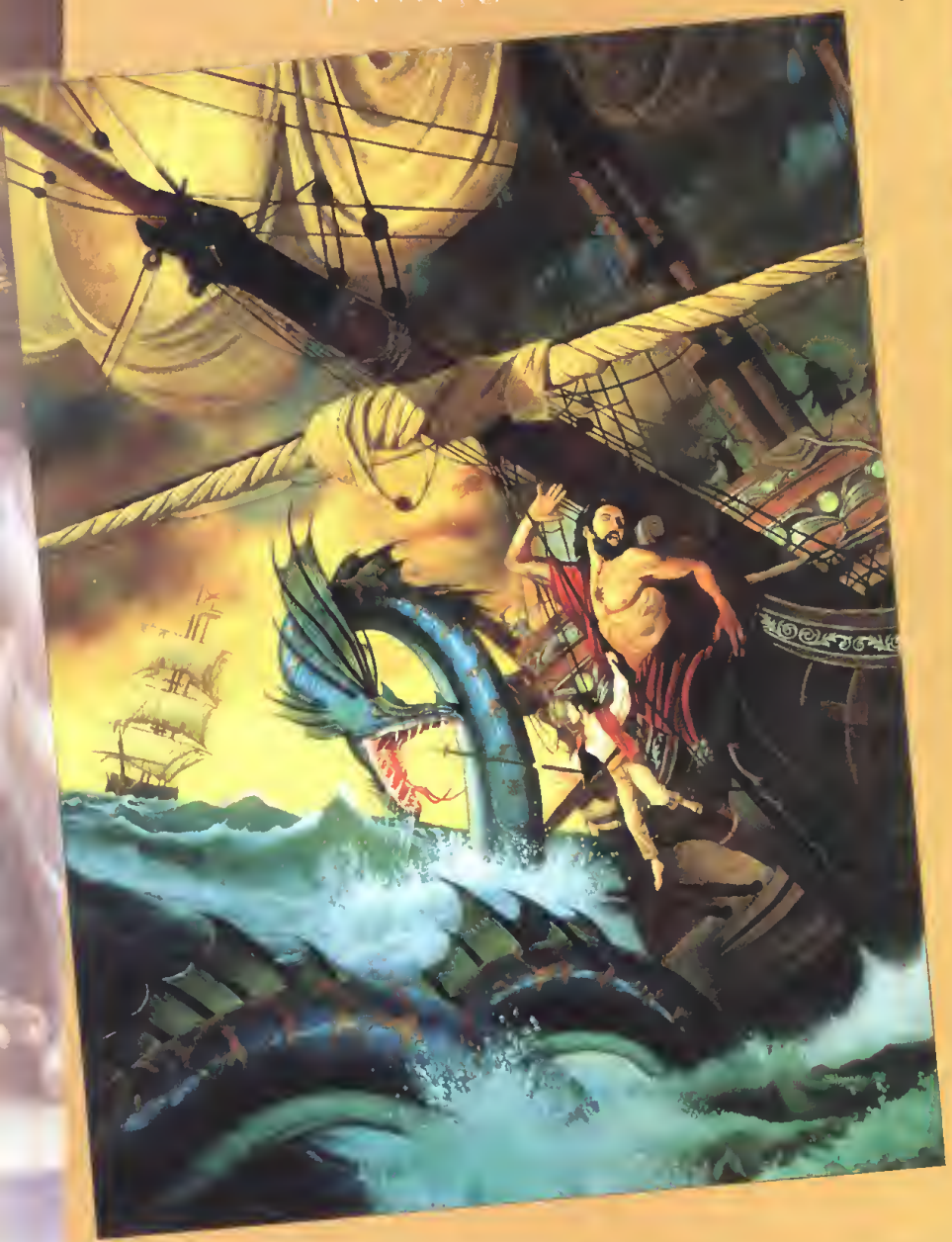
A master colorist he's equally at home with fantasy and science fiction.

A master colorist, he's equally at home with fantasy and science fiction illustration. But fantasy was his first love, from the moment he was introduced to it as a young boy when, at home in Hartlepool, England his eldest brother gave him a copy of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Tolkien changed Youll's life, affecting his choice of profession and even the continent on which he lives.

"*Lord of the Rings* is still my favorite book. I listen to it for practically every painting I do. It's almost the only thing that gets me right into the mood, into the painting."

Ironically, the artist has never painted an illustration for the very book that influenced him so much. "I enjoy other people's illustrations for it but I don't want to take it on. It might change my view of it."

After his introduction to Tolkien's work, Youll knew that he wanted to be a fantasy artist. Together with his identical twin brother, Paul, who had also been bitten by the fantasy bug, Stephen trained at Durham New College of Art and Design, and at Sunderland University. Close friends, the two brothers were so comfortable working together that they would paint canvases together.



Following graduation, Stephen worked as a historical reconstruction artist at Durham cathedral, one of the oldest Cathedrals in England. At the same time that he was painting portraits of important church officials and other historic images he was also preparing a portfolio of fantastic and futuristic images in hopes of breaking into the illustration field.

The 45th World Science Fiction Convention in Brighton in 1987 set in motion events that would result in the Youll brothers' eventual separation. It was there that Stephen met Bantam SF art director Jamie Warren. Two

years later, they married and moved to the United States. The World Science Fiction Convention will again be playing an important part in Stephen's life. He has been invited as the art Guest of Honor at the Convention in Philadelphia in 2001.

When he left his native England, he also had to leave behind his twin brother, his collaborator. "It was a devastating separation," he recalls. "To be apart from Paul, moving to a new country, and asked to work on paintings separately. Terrible. I was so depressed. It took an enormous adjustment."

Luckily, he was distracted by a series of major fantasy and science fiction assignments, including painting new covers for Isaac Asimov's Foundation series. It was at about the same time that he decided to

Left: Youll shows us that his mastery of all things fantastic in the cover image for *Assassin's Quest* by Robin Hobb. Far Left: The shape for Robin Hobb's *Mad Ship* was very deliberate stating, "it's really a 'z' composition." Above: Youll paints an impressive tapestry from the words the writer, Angus Wells, weaves for *Lords of the Sky*.

A bit of mysticism creeps into Youll's artistic process.

switch media, moving from acrylics to oils.

"When I decided to move from acrylic to oils, I'd kind of run dry on acrylics. I had been using airbrush, then blending, and it took a long time—not to mention that cleaning the equipment was a real time-waster. But more importantly, I thought my style was becoming static. I've always thought that oil paint had a special richness. It was more forgiving, a much more versatile medium. I had to relearn certain techniques to use it, but it was worth it.

"I love to be able to push the paint around and blur out edges—to achieve a glow that appears to be airbrush but isn't."

His main goal is realism. "I want to be a true realistic artist. To bring realism back to covers, trying to make it timeless. I always want the painting to work as a painting, not just as a good cover."

Youll believes in the total immersion approach to illustration. "It's very difficult to capture the exact essence of each book, but I try very hard. I really have to immerse myself in the author's writing. Every author deserves to have his work illustrated the way they wrote it rather than have an artist impose his or her own style on it."

He reads each manuscript twice, making intricate notations on each page. "I like to really internalize a book, to be completely familiar with the characters and images, the tone. Then I can let my instinct take over on the composition and the actual

painting process."

A bit of mysticism creeps into Youll's artistic process. "I never paint consciously. I just try to be in a receptive state and something channels down me. One way that helps me is to listen to books on tape—I need something to put me in the right mood while I'm painting. Then it just happens."

His fantasy work allows him to indulge the softer side of the palette, to achieve romantic painterly effects such as the pre—Raphaelite look of the cover for George R.R. Martin's *Clash of Kings*. Rich color and contrast, coupled with strong emotion, makes this painting a powerful and enticing piece.

Continued on page 71

Left:

Far Left:

Above:

Sacrifice holds great power, and it's up to each individual to decide where to spend it.

How we play THE GAME *in salt lake*

BY M. SHAYNE BELL

Illustration by Janet Aulisio

THE PEOPLE IN my section of the baseball stadium were all missing teeth. I noticed that right away. Everybody, except for the 11 people I'd come with, could have starred in one of those dental hygiene movies they show in health classes.

A little Mexican girl turned around and smiled at me when I sat down. Her front teeth were gone. She was a kid, so I didn't think it strange for *her* to be missing teeth. I smiled back and wondered whether Mexicans teach their kids to believe in the Tooth Fairy. The Tooth Fairy had been busy, if the people around me were any indication. The girl's mother spoke to her in stern Spanish and made her turn around. The mother's side teeth were gone.

Some chubby, stubbly faced guy sat down next to me on my right and spilled popcorn into his lap and on the floor. He stuffed the pieces on his pants into his mouth and started gumming and sucking on them, making watery noises. "Going to be a great game," he said, sucking in after the last word. I just stared at him. He held out his hand. "Dave," he said.

I shook his hand.

"Mike," I told him. Dave had no teeth that I could see.

"You come here often, Mike?" he asked.

"No," I said.

"Didn't think so," he said. "Never seen you before."

This was going to be my first baseball game since high school. After graduation I'd sworn never to sit through another ball game, but here I was. I hadn't even had to pay for my ticket, which seemed right considering how much I'd hated team sports as a kid—always the last one picked, a handicap to my team no matter what we'd played, sidelined with thick glasses.

"I wouldn't miss a game," Dave said.

I nodded and stared straight ahead. I hoped he wasn't going to try to talk to me through the whole game. I pretended to be interested in our team, the Salt Lake Buzz, warming up in front of their dugout, and I started to get interested, really, which continued to surprise me. I'd been manning the Utah AIDS Foundation hot line the afternoon some guy from the Buzz had called, and not to ask about safe sex. "Hey, would you guys like a few tickets to our next game?" he'd said. "It's Division playoffs, Vancouver in town. The Twins general manager will be here to watch, maybe tap Cordova for major league play next season."

The Minnesota Twins sponsored our minor league team in the Pacific Coast Northern Division. They took our best players east and paid them big salaries. Cordova was evidently our best player.

I'd told him we'd love tickets, but what I hadn't told him was that the minute he'd asked I'd wanted tickets for my partner Ryan and me. It had surprised me, but I'd wanted them. It would be something out of the ordinary that we could do, something I could give Ryan. The guy from the Buzz had asked how many, and I'd asked how many could he send, thinking people might get into this, a lot of dying people on Social Security and tight budgets might like to watch a baseball game if the tickets were free. There were a lot of us with AIDS in town, a lot of people like me failing therapy with partners sick of taking care of us. He'd said he could send 12. I'd passed the information to Carla, the activities director, and put Ryan's and my names on the sign-up sheet before I'd left from my shift.

But Ryan wouldn't come with me. I was sitting in cheap seats at the far end of right field with Carla and 10 guys I didn't even know.

I felt the top of my head burning in the late afternoon sun. I pulled my cap out of my back pocket and put it on—not much hair left.

"You're cute," the guy to my left said, one of us with Foundation tickets.

I just looked at him. We'd never met. I wasn't sure where he was headed with that comment.

"I'm down from minimum security,"he said, completely open about his situation. "They let me out for Thursday support group, but group got canceled this week since most guys signed up to come here. I have to meet the prison van as soon as the game ends."

"I'm sorry you have to go back there," I said. I wondered what he'd done. It bothered me at first that he talked about coming from prison like he'd have talked about getting off work early. No big deal. But then I thought maybe nonchalance was the only way he could face telling somebody he was in prison. Maybe nonchalance was a wall against how people must react to him. It started to remind me a little of the times I'd had to tell someone I have AIDS.

"Are you new to the group?" he asked.

"No," I said. "I don't go to a support group anymore." I'd attended a support group for three years. Fourteen of the 21 people had died, and after the social worker who led it died, the rest of us disbanded. I hadn't been able to join a group after that and face getting close again to people who were all going to die.

He sucked Pepsi through the straw in his drink, kept looking at me. It was strange and flattering. It felt odd to have somebody think I was worth looking at. When I looked at myself in the mirror, I didn't see that anymore. All I could see was a man with that starved, prisoner-of-war look people with AIDS get toward the end. The guy slouched in his seat and put his leg tight against mine. I didn't move my leg.

The players were doing something down below, the two teams huddling around their coaches: the Salt Lake Buzz in black-and-white striped uniforms on this side of the field; the Vancouver Canadians across the field in robin's egg blue. Salsa music blared from the loudspeakers. People were hurrying to their seats, spreading blankets to sit on because the metal seats were hot in the sun. About two-thirds of the people in this section were Hispanic, and I wondered if they were related to guys on our team, guys with last names like Brito, De la Rosa, Jimenez. I watched everybody around me laughing, smiling, calling to each other in Spanish and a little English, waving. All of these people—Hispanic, Anglo, young, old, middle-aged, teenagers—were missing teeth. I turned around to look at the people behind me. Same thing.

"Get a load of this," the guy to my left said.

Three rows below us, one of the fattest guys I'd ever seen was trying to fit into a seat. He had to tuck himself down. His wife tried to help, pulling on his shirt and pants. When he'd finally squeezed all the way in he turned around, happy to be here and not embarrassed.

I WANTED TO LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE YOU COULD

I was glad he managed that. He smiled to no one in particular. Some of his teeth were missing.

Was it poverty? Were these people not able to afford dental care? I felt sorry for them, but glad they could at least find a few dollars for something like this ball game to take their minds off toothaches.

The music changed to something orchestral and grandiose, the introduction to the "National Anthem." At that moment, the guy from prison touched my hand, down at my side. People probably couldn't see. I didn't want to lead him on, but I didn't move my hand. It wasn't right to touch like this since I was in a committed relationship, never mind what that relationship had become, so I had to let him know. But it had been a long time since anybody had wanted to touch my hand. "What's your name?" I asked him.

"Ned," he said.

I told him my name, then leaned over to him. "I have a partner," I whispered.

He moved his hand, looked away, sucked more of his Pepsi.

"I wonder why sometimes," I said.

He smiled, a little pride saved. I wished he hadn't moved his hand. Ned was a handsome guy. It didn't hurt to admit that. If things had been different, if I weren't committed and if he weren't in prison, I'd probably have gone with him for a beer after the game, maybe on a date Saturday night.

The "National Anthem" began. Everybody stood. A tenor with the Utah Opera Company belted out the song. I was impressed. Most people put their hands over their hearts. Everybody pulled off their hats.

And the game began, Vancouver first up to bat. They soon had a guy on every base, then one Canadian struck out. Another walked to the plate, tapped it with his bat, stood ready for the pitch. The people around me sat absolutely still, absolutely intent on the game. Even Dave quit sucking on his popcorn. "Tucker's one of their best batters," he whispered to me.

Tucker swung. The ball cracked against his bat, arched up high, landed in left field. Brito scooped it up, a Canadian touched home plate, one point for their team, Brito slammed the ball to third base, but the Canadian there was safe, Tucker already on first. The bases were loaded again. Another Canadian stepped up to bat.

"Men's room call," Ned said. Dave and I moved our knees so he could get by. Ned's shoes crunched the popcorn Dave had spilled on the floor.

The little girl turned around in her seat. She looked down at the

crushed popcorn. Dave didn't say a word. He just held out his popcorn bag. She ate a handful, all smiles. "I'm Maria," she said to me. She evidently knew Dave. He let her take another handful. "This is my momma, and my sister Lucia is sitting next to me." Lucia looked back at us. She was maybe 16, quite an age difference between these two sisters.

"How old are you, Maria?" I asked.

"Five," she said. "And that's my brother playing ball. If he does good enough in this game, we're moving to Minneaxolis."

"Cordova's the brother," Dave said to me. "Right outfield."

It was just like I'd thought: relatives in the stadium. The Canadians scored one more point and were out. It was 2-0, and Salt Lake's turn at bat.

Ned came back. He didn't say a word. We just watched the game. By the end of the 4th inning it was Vancouver still in the lead, 5-1. "I have a bad feeling about this," I told Ned, and I wasn't the only one. Lucia and her mother were fingering rosaries. There was a kind of intent murmur in our section. People in other sections were streaming up and down the aisles, carrying armfuls of hot dogs, nachos, drinks, throwing things around, standing and talking. I wondered why they'd come if they weren't going to watch the game.

Cordova hadn't scored a point yet. He'd struck out twice. An old lady walked up the stairs and spoke with Mrs. Cordova in hushed Spanish. She handed Mrs. Cordova a white envelope and walked down the stairs to her row. Lucia stared at her mother. Her fingers stopped moving across her rosary. The wife of the fat man in the row in front of the Cordovas turned around and handed Mrs. Cordova an envelope. Somebody tapped me on my shoulder and handed me an envelope, pointed to Mrs. Cordova. I passed it to her. Dave took a folded, white envelope out of his shirt pocket and gave it to Mrs. Cordova. He looked at me and shrugged. "Cordova's game's about to improve," he said. I had no idea what he was talking about.

Lucia suddenly stood, took Maria's hand, led her past their mother to the stairs. "Candy!" Maria said, waving to us.

"Did you give them money for candy?" I asked Dave, thinking I could contribute a couple of dimes, maybe a quarter. I'd brought a pocketful of change to buy a Pepsi and a hot dog with.

Dave burst out laughing, slammed his hand over his mouth to keep gummed popcorn from flying into Mrs. Cordova's hair. "Don't think so," he said.

I tapped Ned. "Let's get a hot dog."

"No money," he said.

I knew exactly how much I had in nickels, dimes, and quarters, all I'd been able to scrounge together to bring to the game. "I can spot you," I said. I couldn't buy a Pepsi that way, but there were drinking fountains.

He followed me out. "This is weird," I said.

"What, that we're losing?"

We passed a little boy hurrying down the stairs with a white envelope in his hands, his momma calling directions to him in Spanish from four rows up.

"Have you noticed how all these people are missing teeth?"

Ned looked around. "Now that you mention it."

The concourse was crammed with people, the lines for food too long—but how could you go to a baseball game and not eat a hot dog? We waited it out. I bought two hot dogs slathered in green pickle relish, onions, cheese, ketchup, mustard. As we walked back, I could smell the sweet mustard.

We passed Maria, jumping up to look over a banister at people in the costlier seats, and Lucia, not far away, crying behind a pillar in shadows. "Are you all right?" I asked her.

Lucia looked at Ned and me, then recognized us. "I must be brave, señor," she said, that was all.

When we got to our seats, it was Vancouver still in the lead, 6-1. Mrs. Cordova had spread an old, white sheet on the narrow metal walkway in front of her daughters' seats. Mrs. Cordova and the lady who'd been sitting next to Lucia were opening what was now a big stack of white envelopes and emptying the contents—corn meal, sugar, pepper, dried herbs, dried flowers—into their left hands, spreading everything in geometric patterns on the sheet.

"We won't lose," Dave said.

I took a bite of my hot dog. Lucia came back, leading Maria by the hand. When their mother and the other lady had emptied all the envelopes, Mrs. Cordova stepped into the aisle and Lucia and Maria crawled across her seat into theirs, Maria first. They knelt in their seats so their legs wouldn't hang down and disturb the patterns on the sheet. Lucia now sat next to her mother.

One Salt Lake player had struck out, a second had walked to first base. Cordova stepped up to the plate. "Lucia," Mrs. Cordova said, then she took a pair of needle-nose pliers from her dress pocket. Maria covered her eyes. Lucia leaned forward. Mrs. Cordova reached into Lucia's mouth with the pliers. I heard a crack, and the bloody pliers came out with a tooth. Mrs. Cordova dropped the tooth onto the sheet. The ball cracked against Cordova's bat, and he ran. Our man on first base ran. Lucia let her tears and blood spatter the sheet.

CHANGE OUTCOMES IF YOU SACRIFICED.

I felt sick to my stomach. I couldn't believe what I'd just seen. Lucia was spitting blood onto different parts of the sheet. But something was happening in the other sections of the stadium. People were standing and throwing their arms in the air, then people next to them would stand and throw up their arms. I looked at them, then at Lucia, who was coughing now, then at them, then at Cordova running around the bases. The people in the section next to ours stood and threw up their arms, then waited for us. We just stared at them. Our man who'd been on first base touched home plate. The other people in the stadium realized no one in our section was going to throw his or her arms in the air, so they skipped us. People across the field started doing it again.

"The wave," Ned said.

Cordova touched home plate. He'd hit a home run. *Then* people in our section stood and applauded and cheered. We were the only ones in the stadium who'd seen what had happened. The wave stopped. Everybody in the other sections was trying to figure out why people in our section were standing and applauding, out of turn with their wave. Lucia and Mrs. Cordova didn't stand. Few of us around them did. Mrs. Cordova pressed a strip of thin cloth into Lucia's mouth and Lucia bit down hard.

I sat there with a half-eaten hot dog in my hands. Dave had quit gumming his popcorn. "Why?" I asked him.

"Cordova hit the ball, didn't he? Got a home run, didn't he?"

What were the Cordovas involved in—Santaria? Espiritualismo? Macúmba?

"You watch," Dave said. "Cordova's good. He hits plenty of balls on his own. But when the chips are down, when a lot rides on a critical play with no room for error—" He paused. He didn't need to finish his sentence. But I wasn't sure I could accept his explanation.

"Just Cordova?" I asked.

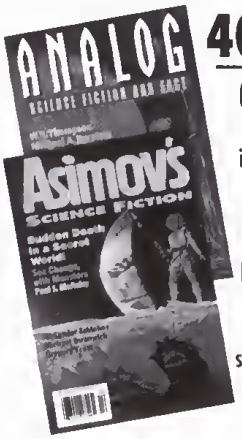
"Haven't you looked around? Of course not. I've been coming here for years. I've helped these people once in a while, but I don't have much left to give them."

He'd never had money, so he'd given them his teeth.

"There's more than just good ball riding on this," Dave said. "There's Lucia's college, the mother's gall bladder surgery, glasses for Maria. Cordova out there is responsible for this family. He can't lose his job, and if he gets good enough, if he makes it to Minnesota, he'll have money to buy them artificial teeth and anything else they

Continued on page 70

Analog & Asimov's Science Fiction at 40% off!



Get a 5 pack of the most popular back issues of **Asimov's Science Fiction** or **Analog Science Fiction & Fact** for just $8.95 plus shipping. Top-notch science fiction, yours for just a *fraction* of the retail price!

YES! Please send me a value pack of back issues of:

❑ Asimov's Science Fiction (IAPK05)

❑ Analog Science Fiction & Fact (AFPK05)

To order send $8.95 plus $3 shipping and handling per pack (U.S. funds) to:

PENNY MARKETING

Dept. SM-100, 6 Prowitt St. • Norwalk, CT 06855-1220

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ___ ZIP _____

Make checks payable to Penny Marketing. Allow 6 weeks for delivery. Add $4 for each pack ordered outside U.S.A. Offer expires 9/30/99. SFPK99

Visit us at WWW.ANALOGSF.COM or WWW.ASIMOVS.COM

Warriors of Artemis

Custom made men's period and fantasy clothing, fabric or leather. Cotton, linen and silk shirts.

www.centerstagecostumes.com

973-635-0904

The School of Wicca, Box 297RF, Hinton, WV 25951

Learn Celtic Witchcraft

Since 1968

Books
Videos

Free protective pentacle!

AUTHORS WANTED

Leading subsidy book publisher seeks manuscripts of all types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scholarly, juvenile and religious works, etc. New authors welcomed. Send for free 32-page illustrated booklet W-20. Vantage Press, 516 W 34th St., New York, NY 10001

Men's Conversation Line

1-888-949-4897

$1.50/min. Discreetly charged to Visa/MC

1-900-786-6266

$1.49/min. Discreetly charged to your telephone. Callers 18+. Touch Tone Phone Required. Compuline Reno, NV

THE GAME

Continued from page 69

might need. The whole family will have made it and moved away."

Part of me wanted to leave. Part of me wanted to get up right then and carry my hot dog to the trash can at the top of the stairs and drive home to an empty apartment. Ryan wouldn't be there. When he came home he wouldn't care about what I'd seen, probably wouldn't even ask. Another part of me thought that what the Cordovas were doing should be true, that sacrifice and pain should result in something good. I wanted to live in a world where you could change outcomes if you sacrificed.

Lucia leaned back. She'd wiped her face clean.

"Sounds weird," Ned said, "but I sort of understand this. I've seen old guys in prison save their cornbread from supper, grind it up after it's dried, and sprinkle it on their window sills, thinking it will help them get out. But they're all still in prison. Maybe they need to add blood."

I kept thinking about what I'd seen, and about glasses, the Minnesota Twins, old men in prison. "Does it always work?" I asked Dave. He shook his head no. The game went on. Vancouver stayed ahead, and at the bottom of the 8th it was 7-4. At one point, Dave stuffed what was left of Ned's and my hot dogs into his popcorn bag and carried them to the trash can. No one had moved the sheet. Vancouver didn't score during their 9th turn at bat. It was the bottom of the 9th inning, and we had to make four points to win.

We got men on first and second bases, and Brito hit them in, though he was tagged out on second.

Two points to go. I looked around to see whether anyone else was spreading a sheet, but Mrs. Cordova's was the only one.

De la Rosa made it to second base. Cordova stepped up to the plate, tapped it with his bat. A lot of people were looking at Lucia, Maria, Mrs. Cordova. A hush fell over our section. Cordova swung and missed. The catcher threw the ball back to the Canadian pitcher.

Lucia leaned forward. Her mother took out her pliers, then put them back. "No, hija," she said. "No, Lucia."

Cordova swung and missed a second time. Lucia reached for the pliers.

"Take one of mine," I said.

The Cordovas, Dave, and a lot of other people looked at me. What they didn't know was that I wouldn't need my teeth much longer. Like Dave, I couldn't give them money, but I could give them this.

Cordova swung and tipped the ball, but the umpire called it a foul ball.

"Move," Dave told the Cordovas. He got them out of their seats. Mrs. Cordova handed me the pliers. I hurried into her seat. "I don't think I can do it myself," I said.

"I'll help," Ned said. He climbed into Lucia's seat and crouched there. "Take a back one," I told him. He was quick. He cracked out a tooth, dropped it on the sheet, and Cordova hit the ball. I leaned over the sheet to let my blood spatter it. I was surprised at how much blood there was. I was surprised at how bad it hurt. I was trying not to cry.

"Hijo bendito," Mrs. Cordova said softly. "Hijo bendito." She handed me a strip of white cloth, and I shoved it where my tooth had been. Carla was there, and she helped me wipe my face. Somebody else from the Foundation wadded up the sheet and hurried it to the trash can, since nobody else should touch the blood on it.

People started standing, clapping, cheering. Others were rushing out to their cars. Dave slapped me on my back. "We won!" he shouted over the noise. We'd won. Cordova was at the fence, and Lucia was there. He reached through the wire to touch her fingers.

Dave handed me a can of Pepsi. "Here," he said. "Get the taste out of your mouth."

"Where did this come from?" I asked.

"Somebody behind us."

I took a drink, but still tasted blood.

"I have to go," Ned said. "I can't be late to the van. Hope I didn't hurt you too much."

We followed him out. I was shaking, but I could walk. It felt better to walk than to sit. I dropped the Pepsi in the trash can at the top of the stairs. I had blood on my pants. People were touching me, saying things to me in Spanish as they passed by.

"Why did you do that?" Carla asked.

"We won, didn't we?" Dave said. He was still with us.

Mrs. Cordova hurried up to me, carrying Maria. "Gracias, hijo," she said to me. "Gracias."

Lucia was biting down hard. There were tears in her eyes. I knew what she was feeling. She tried to smile at me.

It was slow going. The rich got out first. But in the sunset were hints of green, low on the mountains in the east. There is a magic in the world, I thought. I was still part of it for a time.

Ned waved and ran to his van. I wondered if I'd see him again. Maybe I could get his address and write, I thought. Maybe that, at least.

Carla told me goodbye. "Come to the support group next Thursday," she said. "I'm sure people will want to talk to you after what you did today."

"No," I said. I wasn't ready for that. But as I watched her walk away, I thought of my dead friends. They'd have joined another group if they'd have lived. They'd have kept trying. Maybe I should too, I thought.

"Good luck to you, Mike," Dave said. He held out his hand. "We play the game pretty well, when all is said and done."

I shook his hand. "It's not what I expected," I said.

"It never is," he said. ❦

IS FANTASY TOO FLUFFY FOR YOU?
TRY READING THE WORK OF
ERIN HUNT RADO
http://www.primenet.com/~goddess/erin.htm
"Putting Some Action Back Into Fantasy"

MEDIEVAL MOCCASINS
The only completely authentic, deliciously comfortable, and legendary medieval footwear.
Medieval Moccasins,
195 Renfair Dr., Plantersville, TX 77363 (800) 944-3021

VANISHING BOOKS
RARE, OUT-OF-PRINT, FIRST EDITIONS, GHOST STORIES, WEIRD TALES, SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY
Small Press Titles by: Silver Salamander, Ash-Tree and Tartarus
Free Catalogs Issued
PO Box 391289, Cambridge, MA 02139-0014
617-783-1934, http://www musearts com/vanishingbooks

Science Fiction, Fantasy, Horror, Mystery
Monthly catalogues listing the newest books and videos.
US & British titles. Customized catalogues for "wish lists."
All catalogue titles are DISCOUNTED!
Send $1 with complete mailing address to:
CHRONICLES BOOKSHOP
322 S. Shelby #202, Shelbina, MO 63468
www.chroniclesbookshop.com

Wearable Wire Art
Custom Woodcrafts
Fine Hand-Forged Wire Jewelry & Earrings
Staves, Canes & Pendants
SILVERHORN DESIGNS
silverhorn@home.com 410-719-8712
6400 Baltimore National Pike Suite 516 Catonsville MD 21228

IMPERIUM PROVISO
a small press—not a subsidy press—is actively seeking book length
Science Fiction/Fantasy manuscripts
Send synopsis, 1st 3 chapters, and SASE. Also seeking short stories
Send synopsis, total word count, and SASE to:
Imperium Proviso Pub.
814 E. Platte Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80903

ADVANCED SCIENCES
"Where Science Fiction comes alive"
Time Travel Machines • Tesla & Alien Technology • Levitation • Invisibility • Teleportation • Anti-Gravity • Light & Sound Machines • You can do it all!
• • www.advancedsciences.org • •
Huge Catalog $4.00
P.O. Box RF2917, Palm Springs, Ca 92263,
Phone/Fax (760) 327-7355, 11 am-7 pm Pct.
Closed Sunday & Monday — Visa/Mc/Amex/Disc

Learn The Mystery—Live The Magic
WiccaCraft
Reclaim Your Personal Power
Seminary Of Wicca
P.O. Box 1366, Nashua, NH 03061
(603) 880-7237

YOULL

Continued from page 65

"Mainly what I try to do is paint the tapestry—a book is full of incredibly rich visuals—of what the writer weaves," the artist says.

The metaphor of weaving is apparent in his cover for *Lords of the Sky* by Angus Wells. Youll has set a flame-haired woman and her knight in a mist-filled thicket of twisted branches. The forest floor in the foreground is crammed with flowers, leaves, twisted tree-branches, and armor. There's almost too much visual information to process at once.

"Leaving headspace for the book title, that's where the nightmare comes in," he says. "I tend to fill the compositional space right up to the brim. But you need room for the type—if you know where it's going. Mid-tone values are good to put titles over. So I usually have misty mountains or receding views that won't fight with the book title."

"For *Magic Ship* [by Robin Hobb], I thought the painting needed energy, and one way to achieve that is to use diagonals in the composition. So I consciously utilized them to bring attention to the girl's head.

"In *Mad Ship* [by the same author] the composition was very deliberately planned: the prow of the ship just juts right across at the viewer—it's really a 'z' composition."

Youll quickly adds: "Although technique is important, much of the time you just don't know where the painting comes from. You can be painting something and you don't even know how you're doing it. Sometimes I haven't known how to do something, and instinct has gotten me through.

"I've always believed that you're born an artist, not made one. Which doesn't mean that you don't have to work like hell—you do. When I first got to New York, I would sit in my studio from 9 AM to 9 PM, eating tinned spaghetti, driving my studio mate absolutely nuts with my crazed concentration. He used to beg me to get out, to go to a gallery or something. But you can't be good at anything until you put in the time. It's literally sweat equity."

Moving between genres is no problem for him. "I have a real love for the past as much as the future—I enjoy both worlds. I enjoy art history in general. You can bring a futuristic sense to the gothic, and vice versa—what goes around comes around. You could have a very gothic-looking building and add a hover car—and it will work. Or you can render a bleak and forbidding landscape — say, a forest—in the most romantic light and tonality. That's why I like to move back and forth between science fiction and fantasy. It keeps me fresh. And I love the literature. It's almost an honor for me—and a real pleasure—doing covers for these books."

When he's not working, Youll enjoys going for walks with his wife. "You never know what I'll see," he says. "I'll say to Jamie, 'Look, it's a Gilgamesh sky!' And she laughs, because she understands exactly what I mean."

Del Tin Swords • Custom Armour

CHRISTIAN FLETCHER
MEDIEVAL MILITARY
www.christianfletcher.com

Victor Dricks/Sci-Fi Art
BEST LISTING ON THE INTERNET
for
Original Science Fiction Art
Vintage & Contemporary Masters
BUYING—SELLING—TRADING
www.early.com/~scifiart
THE VIRTUAL GALLERY

Renaissance in Leather
Enter the Realm of Anoria...
Custom Made Tunics, Jerkins, Fencing and Archers Vests...
732-450-2051

Each Piece is Uniquely Hand Crafted and Signed
Sorry, No Catalogs
For more info see our website
www.leatherworks.com
LeatherWorks "House of Anoria"
69 Monmouth, Red Bank, NJ 07701

ROBERT A. MADLE

B ❖ O ❖ O ❖ K ❖ S

Science Fiction & Fantasy
Magazines & Books
From 1900 to Present

Many Rare & Unusual Items
Collections Purchased (Large & Small)
96 Page Catalog Send $5.00 to:

Department ROF
4406 Bestor Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20853
301-460-4712

Email: leanashe@juno.com

Send $3.00 for
Full Color Catalog!
(refundable with first purchase)
P.O. Box 5635
Clark, NJ 07066

Leanashe

Chainmail Designers
Medieval Treasures • Unique Designs
We Accept Visa & Mastercard
Visit our NEW, REDESIGNED Website:
www.midianonline.com/leanashe/lenashe.html

By The Sword

INTERNET
http://www.by-the-sword.com
E-MAIL
by_sword@usacomputers.net

Phone for Questions (941) 433-9368
Phone for Orders Only (877) 433-9368
Fax (941) 433-9128

- Swords, Rapiers, Daggers!
- Armour, Chainmail, Helms!
- Re-enactment Items, Coins!
- Leather, Collectibles, Belts!
- Accessories, Longbows!

P.O. Box 07282
Ft. Myers, FL 33919

USED, SCARCE, OUT-OF-PRINT BOOKS
FREE CATALOG! Clive Barker, Anne Rice, Stephen King, HP Lovecraft, & MORE!
S.H. Books P.O. Box 290644
Pt. Orange, FL 32129 • (904) 760-7675

Lady Warrior

Portfolio Vol. II Fine Art Prints
8 new full color originals! On 8 1/2 x 11 stock. Contains nudity. $16.00
Info $2.00–Send to: **PARADISE**,
326 37th St. S.
Brigantine, New Jersey 08203

GORGEOUS ASIAN WOMEN DESIRE AMERICAN MEN!
ROMANCE, CORRESPONDENCE, LIFEMATES!
Free Details, Color Photo Brochure!
P.I.C., Box 461873-RF
L.A., CA 90046 Phone/Fax 323-650-1994
Visit our Website: www.pacisl.com

LONG STEP

Continued from page 59

"Words," said Walker.

"Words," Johnnie Ray conceded. "How else to carry a truth past the moment of its birth? Let's have some time of our own first."

"I am nothing but what I will become," Walker said. "I can't stop it. If I'm ahead of you in this I have no choice. I can't stop it." It sounded like regret.

"Together, we could," Johnnie Ray said.

Walker looked at the Adversary, then, in that vast empty place between the stars, and he considered.

"Eternally opposite. I do not know if it is the same for the other gods, but it is for us. What we become. What they *make* of us. How can we do anything together?"

"It hasn't happened yet. You're very close to apotheosis now, but you're not quite there. Me, I'm still Johnnie Ray... mostly. I can help you. You needn't mistrust me, since you know what I will do. You need do nothing but decide."

"It won't change anything."

"It will hold back the darkness, for a time. That's all you'd do anyway. I want my life; you want to thwart the dark. It will serve both of us. And it won't hurt a bit."

After a time that might have been short or long—neither of them could really tell—Walker put out his hand and Johnnie Ray led him back to Earth like a lost child.

Later, when they met at the agreed place, Walker was moved to mention that it did hurt a bit, but he didn't really mind. He was still divine enough to forgive Johnnie Ray that one lie. Johnnie Ray was still human enough to be grateful.

Later some people came and cut Walker down from the tree and took Johnnie Ray away. He was locked in a large house with doctors and such who wanted to find out why he had done such a terrible thing, and he would tell them, and then go back to his room, or take a—short, always very short—walk on the grounds, for a few days until they got bored enough to ask the same questions again. It wasn't a great life but, as Johnnie Ray said often, it was his.

Sometimes, looking through the fence he would see shoes lying beside the road. Always odd ones, never pairs, and always replaced before they were very old. Sometimes, yes, even cigarettes. New offerings.

Too late.

That's what Johnnie Ray liked to think. The answer gave him comfort, even though he knew it was wrong. Or rather, *incomplete*. Sooner or later the answer would change. It always did. Although Johnnie Ray thought maybe next time he would go up on the tree instead. He wasn't sure such would work, in the divine pattern of things, but he made a promise to himself to ask.

After so many turnings of the Wheel, it was the least he could do. ❧

BACK ISSUES

To get your back issues of Realms of Fantasy, send $5.00 per copy to the address below. List which issues you would like.

FEBRUARY 1998 — Fiction by Jane Yolen, Pat York, Louise Cooper, Peni R. Griffin, Sally McBride.

APRIL 1998 — ***Sold Out!***

JUNE 1998 — Fiction by Don Webb, Christopher Rowe, Tanith Lee, Alan Smale, Robert CharlesWilson, Janni Lee Simner.

AUGUST 1998 — Fiction by Constance Ash, Sherwood Smith, S.P. Somtow, James Van Pelt, J. Michael Matuszewicz

OCTOBER 1998 — Fiction by Christopher Mowbray, David Sandner, Fiona Kelleghan, Peni R. Griffin, Robert Charles Wilson, James Van Pelt

DECEMBER 1998 — Fiction by Michael Libling, Dave Hoing, Lisa R. Cohen, Peni R. Griffin, Leslie What, James Sallis

REALMS OF FANTASY, PO Box 749, Herndon, VA 22070

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

1 Publication Title: Realms of Fantasy Magazine 2 Publication Number: 1071-1953 3 Filing Date: 12/31/98 4 Issue Frequency: 6X Yearly 5 Number of Issues Published Annually: 6 6 Annual Subscription Price $16.95 7 Complete Mailing Address of Known office of Publication: 11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston VA 20190, Fairfax County Contact Person: Mark Hintz Telephone: 703-471-1556 8 Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: 11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston VA 20190 9 Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor Publisher: Mark Hintz, 11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston VA 20190, Editor: Shawna McCarthy, 11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston VA 20190 Managing Editor: Cari Gnam, 11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston VA 20190 10 Owner: Sovereign Media Company Inc, 11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston VA 20190, Mark Hintz 11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston VA 20190 Carl Gnam-11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston VA 20190 11 Known Bondholders, mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities: None 12 Tax Status: Does Not Apply 13 Publication Title: Realms of Fantasy Magazine 14 Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: October 1998 15 Extent and Nature of Circulation: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: a Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run) 82,642 b Paid and/or Requested Circulation (1)Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors and Counter Sales (Not mailed) 19,517 (2) Paid or Requested Mail Subscriptions (Include Advertiser's Proof copies and exchange copies) 25,306 c Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation 44,823 d Free Distribution by Mail 0 e Free Distribution Outside the Mail 0 f Total Free Distribution 0 g Total Distribution 44,823 h Copies not Distributed (1) Office Use, Leftovers, Spoiled 2,830 (2) Returns from News Agents 34,989 i Total 82,642 Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation 100% Actual number of Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: a Total Number of Copies: 80,345 b Paid and/or requested circulation (1) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, and Counter Sales 33,513 (2) Paid or Requested Mail Subscriptions 25,208 c Total Paid and or Requested Circulation 58,721 d Free Distribution by Mail 0 e Free Distribution outside the mail 0 f Total Free distribution 0 g Total Distribution 58,721 h Copies not distributed (1) Office Use, Leftovers, Spoiled 1,994 (2) Returns From News Agents 19,680 i Total 80,345 Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation 100% 16 Publication of Statement of Ownership will be printed in the April 1999 issue of this publication 17 Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner Mark Hintz, Publisher, Date: December 31, 1998

SIEGE LAND
A new interactive adventure game!
No computer needed!
Interact with players from around the country without leaving your home!
Send for free info to: PARADISE
326 37th St. S.
Brigantine, New Jersey 08203

Dragons 'n Stuff
Dragons, Gargoyles, Wizards, Skulls, Unicorns, Incense Burners & more.
www.dragonsnstuff.com
(785) 461-5915

Continued from page 33

the resonance of parallel motifs which, on a close reading of the two tales, reveal some remarkable similarities.

If you refer to the Lang text of "Beauty and the Beast," you will see that Beauty's father "suddenly lost every ship he had upon the sea, either by dint of pirates, shipwreck, or fire∑and at last from great wealth he fell into the direst poverty." In "Shimchong," the father is not a merchant, but he is likewise a former man of means fallen upon hard times; the merchant who loses his ships is another character, but the story contains the same motifs, as if the father in "Beauty and the Beast" were split into two characters: Old Man Shim and the merchant. In a Confucian culture, this splitting would make perfect sense, because for Shimchong's father to be a merchant would be to demean her lineage (merchants are beneath farmers in the Confucian social hierarchy).

Likewise, in both tales we find that the father's unwitting transgression leads to the daughter's sacrifice. In "Shimchong," it is the spur-of-the-moment promise; in "Beauty," it is the father's plucking of the rose he wishes to bring her as a gift. In both cases, the daughter sacrifices herself willingly to what seems a terrible doom in order to save her father, and in both cases this sacrifice leads to an unanticipated positive outcome, namely a happy marriage.

In "Shimchong," the daughter is sacrificed to the Dragon King, a "beast." As in "Beauty," the "beast" allows her to go back to her home when she pines for her loved ones, despite her palatial accommodations. As with the merchant/poor man split, it is as if the beast as the future husband and the beast as the recipient of sacrifice were split in the Korean version.

In both tales, the daughter is visited by a maternal figure in a dream, and that figure provides valuable advice. Both end in marriage and reintegration of family, although the mother is prominently missing in both cases. In both tales the daughter is associated with a flower.

Metamorphosis is also featured in both tales, although in an inverted fashion: In "Beauty," the Prince is transformed into a beast as punishment (in the Lang text, the transgression is never made clear), while in "Shimchong," the future bride is transformed into a flower as a reward for her virtue. In both cases, the marriage occurs after the protagonist returns to his or her original form, and that metamorphosis is due to love.

But despite the many parallels between the tales, the underlying messages of the "Beauty and the Beast" and "Shimchong" are markedly different because of what is emphasized in each cultural context. "Shimchong" is used explicitly to teach filial piety whereas the "moral" of "Beauty and the Beast" is often read as a message about learning how to look beyond superficial appearances. And yet, despite the Disney attempt to empower Beauty with its feminist Belle and the Korean women shamans' use of Shimchong in their healing rituals, the two tales also serve as models of behavior that suit the needs of patriarchal culture. The most significant difference is in the context of telling: In Korea "Shimchong," with its pseudo-historical truth claim, can serve as a "real" model of virtuous behavior, while in the West, "Beauty" is clearly relegated to the realm of fairy tales whose role is to entertain and instruct without necessarily encroaching into the world of realism. Both, of course, accrue complex layers of meaning as the listener grows into an adult.

When my uncle told me stories, he always refused to offer an interpretation, claiming that if he could simply tell me the meaning, the story itself was unnecessary. But the truth is that we tend to make meanings out of stories—personal meanings that often do not conform to the stories' (or the storyteller's) rhetorical purpose. Great folk tales like "Beauty" and "Shimchong" survive precisely because they can serve a multitude of rhetorical purposes and yet also have rich layers of meaning to offer. As my sister's daughter, Sarah, and my own daughter (ironically named Bella) hear these tales from us, I look forward to being surprised by their creation of their own meanings of these tales. ❧

Heinz Insu Fenkl is the author of Memories of My Ghost Brother, *an autobiographical novel about growing up in Korea as a bi-racial child in the '60s. He has taught at Sarah Lawrence, Bard, Vassar, and Yonsei University. His courses have included Creative Writing, Asian American Literature, Korean Literature, and East Asian Folklore. Seventeen of his translations of Korean folk tales will appear in the* Columbia Anthology of Traditional Korean Literature, *due to be published later this year; he is also completing his own volume of retellings of Korean folk tales entitled,* In the Old, Old, Days when Tigers Smoked Tobacco Pipes: Myths, Legends, and Folktales from Korea. *He currently lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan with his wife, Anne B. Dalton and their daughter, Isabella Myong-wol; he teaches in the graduate Creative Writing Program at Eastern Michigan University.*

Some sources of Korean folk tales:

Collections: Folk Tales from Korea, *translated and edited by Zong In-sob.* Tales of a Korean Grandmother, *by Frances Carpenter.* Korean Folk-Tales, *edited by James Riordan.*

Children's books: The Green Frogs: A Korean Folktale, *retold and illustrated by Yumi Heo.* The Sun Girl and the Moon Boy, *by Yangsook Choi.* The Korean Cinderella, *by Shirley Climo, illustrated by Ruth Heller.* The Mole's Daughter: An Adaptation of a Korean Folktale, *illustrated by Julia Gukova.* Younger Brother and Older Brother: A Korean Folktale, *by Nina Jaffe, illustrated by Wenhai. Ma.*

Original Fantasy and Science Fiction Art

REPRESENTING STEPHEN YOULL AND OVER 40 LEADING ARTISTS
All New Winter 1999
Catalog #12 Available Now!
$10 ppd U.S. ($14. overseas)
Worlds of Wonder®
PO Box 814-ROF, McLean, VA 22101
(703) 847-4251 fax (703) 790-9519
Come visit our website:
http://www.wow-art.com/

FREE Catalog!
OUR LOWEST PRICES EVER!
Knives, Swords and Self-Defense Items

Check Us Out at www.budkww.com
Toll Free 1-800-877-7140 Ext. RF2
Clip coupon and mail to address below.
☐ YES! Please send me the FREE 64-Page Catalog!
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip _____
BUD K Worldwide, Inc.
P.O. Box 2768 • Dept RF2 • Moultrie, GA 31776

BY ERIC BAKER

Bethesda's Redguard *improves on a classic, proving that bigger is not necessarily better.*

BETHESDA SOFTWARE IS ONE OF THOSE VIDEO GAMING COMPANIES THAT HAVE THEIR hearts in the right place. By that I mean that they understand that what computer role-playing games gain in graphics and sound over paper role-playing games, they lose in both size of world and openness of plot. An *Ars Magica* or *Legend of the Five Rings* Game Master can only describe the port city your characters have arrived at. He cannot show you the people and the buildings. What the Game Master can do, however, is let you go anywhere and talk to anyone in that city; a computer program running a city only can let characters go and do what it has been programmed to let them go and do. Bethesda is one of the companies that is trying to close that gap.

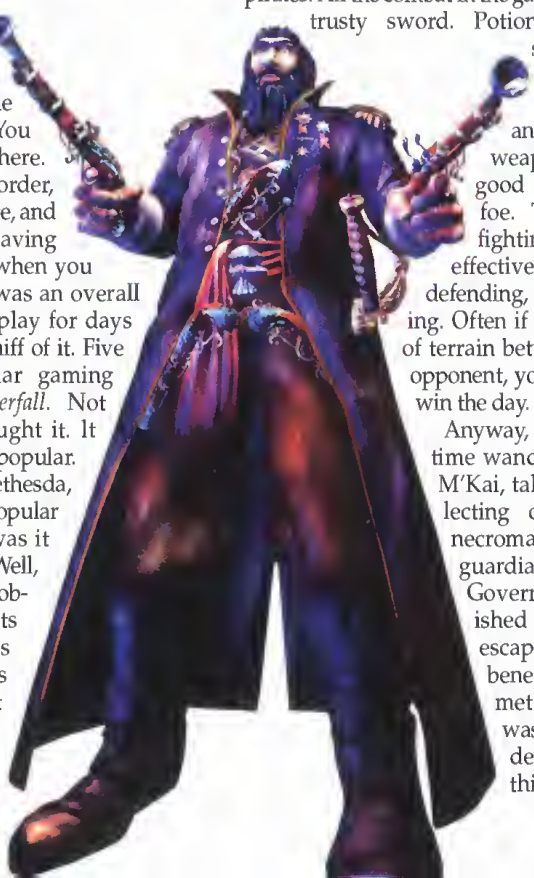
BELOW: *For their computer RPG* Redguard, *Bethtesda Software has improved the area of adventure.* RIGHT: *Exploring the Rokugan code of honor and duty with AEG's* Code of Bushido. BOTTOM, RIGHT: *Solve the riddle of who betrayed* Captain Redjack.

To this point, the solution Bethesda has used to the limitations of computer Game Masters has been size. They have a fully realized campaign background called "The Elder Scrolls" and it is as big and complex as the background to any pen and paper RPG. *Daggerfall*, its last title in "The Elder Scrolls" setting was played with a map that covered more land area than England does. They filled this map with computer-controlled players, cities, dungeons, encounters, quests — all the trappings of Fantasy adventure. You could start anywhere and go anywhere. You could attack the quests in any order, although some were tougher than were, and you were better off saving the tougher ones for when you were tougher. There was an overall story, but you could play for days without catching a whiff of it. Five people in my regular gaming group bought *Daggerfall*. Not traded it around; bought it. It was unprecedentedly popular.

Unfortunately for Bethesda, *Daggerfall* was not as popular with everyone as it was it my friends. Why not? Well, there were technical problems with it, but its biggest drawback was ... its size. Five of us played *Daggerfall*, but none of us "finished" it. It was just so big that it wore you out before you could do everything.

Well, having a game that is too large is easy to fix, and Bethesda has. *Redguard* (*Bethesda Software, Rockville, MD for Win 95. 1998, $50.00*) is set on the small island of Stros M'Kai in the Kingdom of Hammerfell. You play Cyrus, a Redguard, the Hammerfell noble class, who has been in exile from Hammerfell for 10 years. As the story opens, Hammerfell has just been conquered by the Empire and your sister, Iszara, has gone missing. You return to Stros M'Kai to find her, and end up becoming embroiled in the resistance to the Empire.

Done as a three-quarter view, first-person game in the *Tomb Raider* style with 3-D-card capable graphics, I was a little surprised that the first thing I had to do in *Redguard* was defend the ship that was taking me home from pirates. All the combat in the game is done with your trusty sword. Potions can make you stronger and harder to hurt, but only at the end do you get any kind of ranged weapon, and it is only good against one special foe. The game's sword fighting is simple, but effective, a mixture of defending, lunging, and swinging. Often if you can put a piece of terrain between you and your opponent, your longer reach will win the day.



Anyway, I was having a great time wandering around Stros M'Kai, talking to people, collecting clues, battling the necromancer's undead guardians and the Imperial Governor's troops. I finished the first mini-quest, escaped the catacombs beneath the palace, and met with the pirates. I was feeling pretty confident and in control of this game. And then I

ADV FILMS Proudly Presents:

Legend of Crystania

The Adventures of the Beginning Continue

IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE GODS' KING'S DEFEAT, THE ISLAND OF CRYSTANIA FACES AN UNCERTAIN AGE. STRANGE DREAMS HAUNT THOSE CLOSEST TO THE SHIFTING POWERS OF THIS LAND OF GODS. ON THE EVE OF THE NEW BEGINNING, DARKNESS, ONCE DISPERSED, GATHERS ANEW.

Available from
SUNCOAST
MOTION PICTURE COMPANY
And other find stores

ANIMATION FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

www.advfilms.com • info@advfilms.com

© 1996 KAZUNO KIYOSE & GROUP SNE / CRYSTANIA PRODUCTION COMMITTEE

had to go to the Goblin Caverns. That was when I discovered that *Redguard* had more in common with *Tomb Raider* than the over-the-shoulder point of view. There are puzzles and traps and settings in *Redguard* to rival anything in *TR II*. The first time you walk up the path and the Dwarven Observatory appears out of the mist, it just blows you away. The inside is just as impressive, but getting the telescope working again is just as much of a "jump here, climb that, throw this switch to get through that door proposition" as any other action game.

So *Redguard* has a confined area of adventuring and a single overarching plot while retaining the go-anywhere, talk-to-anyone component of *Daggerfall*. It still takes a long time to solve. There is no simple, all-purpose tactic to get you through it as the archery is in *Might and Magic VI*. You have to keep at each of *Redguard*'s challenges until you pass them. Personally, I wish fewer of those challenges had required trying a jump over and over again until muscle memory finally let me accomplish them. And fewer timed puzzles. Other than that, I was impressed and entertained by *Redguard*.

Live the life of a sea mage in The Mythic Seas. *BELOW: More from* Redjack: Revenge of the Brethren. *NEXT PAGE:* Legacy: War of Ages *mixes vampires and cyberpunk well in a gothic-techno RPG.*

Code of Bushido: An Adventure of Honor and Duty *by Ree Soesbee, Rob Vaux, John Wick, and Pat Kapera. Alderac Entertainment Group, Ontario, CA 1998, 48 pp., $9.95.*

Alderac Entertainment is publishing its *Legend of the Five Rings* modules in series. They have the "Intrigue" series (adventures that have more to do with diplomacy and detective work than combat), the "City of Lies" series (adventures in and around the Scorpion Clan trading city of Ryoko Owari), and now the "Bushido" series (adventures exploring the Rokugan code of honor and duty). The first in this series is called, simply enough, *Code of Bushido*.

CoB is an adventure that would be hard to pull off in any other background than a Japanese one like LoFR, because you need a code of honor as intricate and demanding as *Bushido* to provide the conflict. Take the first of *CoB*'s three parts. The characters are escorting a chest full of spell scrolls to a *shugenja* (magic user's) festival when they are attacked by an overwhelming force of bandits who steal the scrolls from them. In a normal Fantasy adventure, the action would consist of tracking the bandits down, killing them, and getting the scrolls back. Not in Rokugan. In this *faux* Japanese world, the first order of business is keeping the theft a secret. The scrolls are intended to be first prize in the magic competition that is part of the festival. If it became known that they were stolen, the loss of honor to everyone from the festival sponsors to the characters themselves would be unbearable. Thus, if the adventure plays out as intended, the characters will find themselves bartering with the bandits, trying to arrive at a solution that not only gets the scrolls back, but also satisfies everyone's (including the bandits) honor. To pull it off, a Game Master needs a group of players who either already understand Bushido, or who are at least willing to be guided by the NPC's pronouncements about it.

Each of *CoB*'s parts builds on the others, and in each case the tests of the player's honor get harder. The adventures play off Bushido's interlocking ties of duty and honor so that at each point there is usually at least two right answers. Like the questions on a medical school exam, one choice is "righter" than the others, but the characters have to not only be able to see it, they have to be willing to look for it.

If you have players who like to explore not just the surroundings of a role-playing world, but also its mind-set and inner life, then *CoB* is what you are looking for. If you can keep your players inside the assigned rails of the adventure, they will learn things about the hard choices that being faithful to a code of honor can bring about. They may also learn that stretching your ethical muscles in moral dilemmas is just as entertaining as stretching your sword arm to cut down another monster.

The Mythic Seas *by Alan Smithee with Roderick Robertson. Atlas Games, Roseville, MN, 1998, 96 pp. $16.95.*

Moving from Mythic Japan to Mythic Europe, Atlas Games' latest release for *Ars Magica* is called *The Mythic Seas*. If you haven't encountered *Ars Magica*, then it is worth your time to find. Set in the Mythic (as opposed to the historical) Europe of the 1200s, *AM* is built around the conceit that there exists a largely secret society of mages, the Order of Hermes, that maintains covenants (small communities of wizards and their servants) all over the European map. *AM* introduced the idea of troop play to role-playing, so that with just a few players you could play a relatively large community. All the players have at least three characters—a mage, a companion, and usually two or three grogs—but they don't play them all at the same time. At any given session, the adventure will focus on the player who is running his mage, while everyone else plays their companion or their grogs, content to take commands because they know that next week it may be their turn to run their mage and thus be in charge. *AM* is a groundbreaking and very entertaining system.

The new supplement, *The Mythic Seas*, contains all the information you need to start a seaside covenant, to explore the seas themselves, or to simply travel by water from one part of Mythic Europe to another. There are chapters on ships and sailing, life on the sea (including the magic hazards of the era), the Hermetic Seas (new archetypes, new virtues and flaws), maritime magic, and a sea oriented bestiary of mundane and magic creatures. All this is written up with style and simplicity. Just the new spells, virtues, flaws, and archetypes are worth the price of admission, but when added to the background on medieval sailing, *The Mythic Seas* becomes a must-have book for anyone planning on letting their character near the water.

Redjack: Revenge of the Brethren*, executive producer Eric Quist, lead programmer Steve Britton, screenplay by Molly Johnson and Bill Appleton. Produced by Cyberflix, and published by THQ, Calabasas, CA for the Mac and Win 95. 1998, $50.00.*

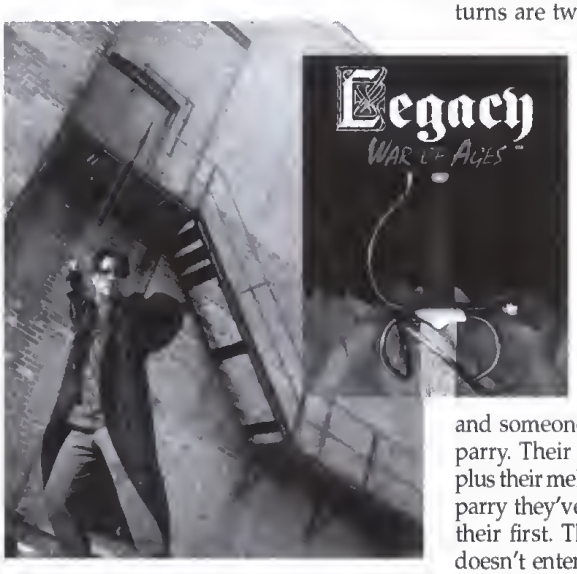
Is it still a pirate game if you don't get to rape and plunder? In *Redjack: Revenge of the Brethren*, the captain makes it clear when you, in your game identity as Nick Dove, sign on that you are privateers, not pirates, but he seems to be the only one who makes that distinction. Everyone else, from the blacksmith to your brother to your fiancee urges you to go be a pirate. And you do. Cyberflix makes interactive stories, but they

aren't the sort of stories where you decide to forgo a life of adventure to help your brother out with the farm.

Redjack is a beautiful game. Its 20 interactive characters are rendered in a sort of claymation style that is appealing. There are six locales where you interact with these characters, trying your hand against 40-some puzzles as you seek to solve the riddle of who betrayed Captain Redjack and how to get to his gold. The game is at its best when you are talking to the characters and trying to solve the puzzles. It is at its worst any time there is shooting or throwing going on. Swordplay is not as smooth as you'd want it either, but it is better than dodging bottles. *Redjack* doesn't require the reflexes and action skills that *Redguard* did, but it is also much simpler and much, much shorter to solve. If you have to choose between the two, it comes down to how much you like jumping and throwing switches compared to listening to dialogue.

Legacy: War of the Ages *by Brandon Blackmoor and Susan Blackmoor. Blackgate Publishing, Portsmouth, VA. 1994, 244 pp., $25.00.*

Blackgate Publishing's *Legacy: War of the Ages* draws its background from a lot of different sources, primarily the *Highlander* franchise and various vampire myths, with some cyberpunk mixed in. The base setting is the United States in a Techno-Gothic future, but since the player characters are immortals, the action can be set in any era. The rules themselves are oriented toward the character exploration and story-telling end of the role-playing game spectrum. You are 50 pages in before the authors even mention statistics or dice, and the (good) advice on how to run a campaign is placed ahead of the section on how to resolve combat.



When you do get to the numbers, the system hangs together well. Immortal characters may be of any social class, and may have any amount of money. If they want things like magic swords or artifacts or something else not generally available, that may cost some accent points. Accents are just little abilities to flesh out your character. Players can spend all their points to make their characters psychic, or they can buy lesser abilities like Extreme Patience, Light Sleeper, Quick Draw, Extra Wealth, and so on. For convenient reference, the authors break immortals down into five classifications, based on when the immortal was born. The authors admit that these classifications have a European bias, but they aren't trying to tell the story of every immortal the world over.

The power of an immortal is tracked by the number of experience points (called Karma) that they have earned over their life. An average Imperial is suggested to have 300 Karma, while a Post Modern probably has only 30. Karma is used to buy up stats and skills, or as luck/fate/fortune points. Karma is earned for role-playing (about two points a session), or by giving the true death to another immortal, which earns the character 10 percent of his victim's Karma.

When *Legacy* does get around to statistics and combat resolution, the system turns out to be lean and smooth. Only five stats, Intelligence, Agility, Strength, Presence, and Psyche, each (except for Strength) governing a list of skills. The skills are broad and there are no specializations.

In combat, the primary modifier is your opponent's dodge skill. Everyone has dodge skill, but at level 0. If you want to be better at not being hit, then Dodge has to be one of the skills you buy in character creation. Combat turns are two seconds, you get one action each turn, and highest agility goes first. If you want to do something purely defensive, like parry or dive for cover, then you can "force" an action and go before your turn, if you haven't yet done anything this turn. Damage is a straight number, modified only by hit location.

My favorite part of combat is this: if a character has saved an action (or just hasn't acted yet) in hand-to-hand combat, and someone hits them, they can declare a parry. Their chance to parry is their agility plus their melee weapon skill minus 1 for each parry they've done that turn, so minus 1 for their first. That's it. Their opponent's skill doesn't enter into it at all. It seems counter-intuitive, but when my friends and I actually played out a couple fights, it worked just fine.

Legacy is a good system with lots of good advice on how to make characters and run a world. The background is broad enough to leave open lots of stories, while being specific enough to keep you from getting lost. It's only flaw is that as a game about immortals, I would like to have had more source material for setting adventures in the past, and more suggestions on how to integrate those past adventures with modern events. Small quibbles with what is a good game. ❧

DRAGON*CON
America's Premiere Science Fiction Event!
Over 300 Guests Include:
Kevin J. Anderson
Stephen R. Donaldson
Brian Froud
Brian Herbert
Fred Saberhagen
William Stout
Robert Anton Wilson
and featuring
Billy Dee Williams
Star Wars' Lando Calrissian
Richard Biggs
Babylon 5's Dr. Steven Franklin
Frank Gorshin
Batman's Original Riddler
David Hedison
Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea
Richard Hatch
Battlestar Gallactica's Apollo
Paul Dini
Batman and Superman Producer
and Master of Ceremonies
Peter Jurasik
Babylon 5's Londo Mollari
July 1 - 4, 1999
Hyatt Regency Atlanta & Atlanta Apparel Mart
For Info Call (770) 909-0115 or Write: Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696, or link to: http://www.dragoncon.org

EDITORIAL

Continued from page 6

one perceives it primarily in terms of its images, it will "feel" like Fantasy.

This in turn throws light on an attitude I've seen expressed repeatedly. It is the attitude that says that Science Fiction is just a branch of Fantasy." This is usually "proven" by the observation that Science Fiction commonly makes use of impossible tropes such as (the three almost invariably cited) immortality, faster-than-light travel, and time travel, and therefore must be Fantasy.

A curious argument. The notion that Science Fiction cannot deal in impossible ideas is of course false. The impossibility may simply be used to take us someplace where we cannot otherwise go. What follows is often as rigorously "scientific" as the author can make it.

It seems to me that these people seek to define Science Fiction out of existence as "actually" Fantasy, because they think best in images. They therefore perceive the images in Science Fiction more strongly than the ideas. To them, then, Science Fiction will "feel" like fantasy. Science Fiction that is low in images and high in ideas will not appeal to them at all. How many people who believe that SF is just Fantasy are fans of Isaac Asimov?

Why this strong need to annex Science Fiction to Fantasy? Why the equally strong feeling on the other side, that Science Fiction is different from and superior to all other forms of literature?

As I see it, there are two modes of thinking here—one that deals best with images and one that deals best with ideas. These two ways of thinking go far to explain the difficulty we have long experienced in defining Science Fiction. Naturally, these two types of readers will find it difficult to agree on a definition.

Moreover, if the author is any good, he/she will use images and ideas, both to make you feel and to make you think. If you do both, you may be puzzled as to whether to point at the work as Science Fiction or as Fantasy.

The existence of Pseudo-Scientific Fantasy and Pseudo-Fantastic Mainstream further complicate the picture. For my money, these are "mainstream" fictions. If I had to describe (not define) the mainstream in one word, it would be "cuddly": fiction that reinforces all the currently accepted cultural imperatives and shibboleths. PSF and PFM definitely do that. No wonder Brian Aldiss publicly wished we could outlaw SF again, as it was in the wild old days. I suggest that real SF is still outlawed, that what is popular is PSF and PFM. As Damon Knight said, "Science fiction will never be popular. It can't stand the suppression."

The classic Science Fiction idea story, (e.g. *The Cold Equations* by Tom Godwin, *The Roads Must Roll* by Heinlein, *The Equalizer* by Jack Williamson) is subversive, not cuddly. It tells us that Change occurs. That is revolutionary; earth-shaking. No wonder academe still resists Science Fiction, no wonder it loves Fantasy, of whatever mode.

To paraphrase Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: "Yon genre has a lean and hungry look; it thinks too much; such books are dangerous."

Popular Fantasy is always conservative; its made-up societies are always reactionary, even when they try to be *relevant* and *liberated*.

Do I decry Fantasy? No; *real* Fantasy, the rare stuff, the stuff from Elfland not Poughkeepsie, is as dangerous in its way as Science Fiction. Real Fantasy is not about the gingerbread house, or the witch, or even the oven and the fate contemplated. It's about the wicked stepmother, who is as much alive in these dark days as ever in the Schwarzwald. Fantasy that does not confront her, and the other things that Fantasy (and all literature) is really about, is not Fantasy at all, it is merely "pseudo-fantastic mainstream" fiction.

Fantasy and Science Fiction are equally valid, but they do different things. They are not identical, they cannot even be compared. We bracket them together because the ideas of Science Fiction generate images that affect us as strongly as any archetype in the vaults of Fantasy. Indeed, Science Fiction's most powerful idea, The Future, is as mythical and fabulous as any of them, so much so that we have generated hundreds of Fantasy images to symbolize it. ❧

Rob Chilson

ARTHUR

Continued from page 46

Arthur felt empty. The wish seemed very far away, like something in a dream that can't be reached. He wrapped his arms around himself to keep out the cold and let his eyes fall out of focus, wondering sleepily what on earth there was left to wish for. *A wish,* he thought ... *something good, something I want.... A knife for carving?...no, no, of course not. Books?... trees cut down, or lambskin parchment, or something worse. Think of all those birthday wishes—I wanted so many things!* And suddenly, quietly, he was thinking about strawberries, strawberries with fresh cream.

But to spend my only wish on that—how stupid! And yet, for a moment, in the clarity of mind that comes with the flow of sleep, he could see them in the wooden bowl—the red swirls in the white cream where he had crushed the fruit with his spoon to bring out the juice. *And sometimes Cook will mix raspberries with them,* he thought, his mouth starting to water. *But no—there are none this time of year. Strawberries come in autumn. Still, you must plant them...in...in...*

"Do you leave tomorrow, Morgana?" he asked her.

"They plan to," she answered. "It's cold enough still that the roads will be firm." Then she stifled a yawn against the back of a slender hand.

"I can't think of anything to wish for, Morgana," he said, leaning back against the clammy stone wall and letting his eyes close.

"You must wish," she said, her own voice growing smaller.

"I'm too sleepy," he said. She didn't answer.

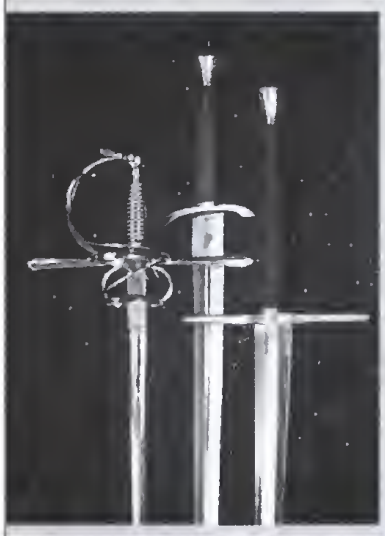
"All right, then," he said after a pause. "This is my third wish: I wish spring would come."

He waited, eyes still closed, for an objection. But there was only silence, in which the flickering of the torches sounded plainly. He let his thoughts loosen and blur momentarily, aware only of the heat of the nearest torch against his face. When he opened his eyes she was gone.

Later, neither of them saw, lost in the deep slumber of their young bodies, how with the rise of a warm south wind that night the clouds began to move easily across the quiet starlit sky—how the last ice edging the streambeds and riverbanks broke away and was dissolved in the flowing water—how the last hidden patches of snow on the wooded north slopes began soaking into the earth. None of the sleepers in the great house, wine and food settling slowly through them, dreams rising and falling, smelled the now-warm dampness of the ground as it came in at the windows, clean and strong with the opening of numberless seeds and bulbs and the stirring of roots and tubers down within it. And no one at all—except perhaps Hauberk or another of the mastiffs, waking momentarily in the kennel pens at first light—heard the strange new note of joy that had come into the great singing of the birds when dawn opened out over the greening land. ❧

Golden Age Productions

1-800-671-4867



Where You Can Find The Finest Fantasy, Horror & Science Fiction Merchandise

Swords * Leather * Shields * Museum Replicas * Daggers * Chain Mail * Unusual T-Shirts Helms * Gauntlets * Rapiers * Broadswords * Crossbows * Wargaming Supplies * Books Bracers * Maces * and ...

Monsters * Models * Masks * Roleplaying Games * Make-Up * Resin Kits * Vampire Jewelry * Paints * Aliens * Body Parts * Jars of Eyeballs * Costumes * Game Books * TV Collectibles * Spacecraft Models * and more!

If we don't have it, We'll try to get it!

Call for our Free Catalog

GOLDEN AGE PRODUCTIONS
2760 Michigan Ave., Suite 2,
Kissimmee, FL 34744

fax: 1-407-944-4400
http://www.goldenage-prod.com

Your Complete SF Bookstore in the Mail!

WEINBERG BOOKS has merged operations with The Stars Our Destination, a large storefront science fiction bookstore. We publish a monthly catalog (mailed first class) featuring everything new in the SF/Fantasy/Horror fields, from books to paperbacks to numerous small press publications not available anywhere else. Send $1.00 for our latest catalog. You won't be disappointed.

WEINBERG BOOKS at The Stars Our Destination
1021 W. Belmont, Chicago IL 60657

FANTASY CRAFTS

Select from a variety of fantasy/medieval cross stitch charts, quilt patterns and other craft items.

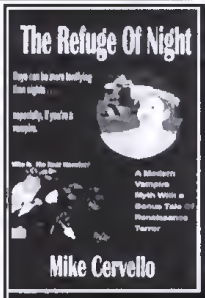
CROSS STITCH - Hundreds of titles from: Dragon Dreams, Moongate Designs, Teresa Wentzler, Vermillion Stitchery & more

3-D DECOUPAGE - Kits and Print Packs

QUILT BOOKS - Celtic Applique and others

Order your 75-page catalog today for $8 (includes $5 coupon off first order of $20 or more)! MC, VISA, check or money orders accepted

LETHA WELCH
P.O. Box 174, Grafton, WI 53024
(414) 375-8792
Visit our website: www.fantasycrafts.com



CVK Publishing Presents:

A Lena Banks Double Feature!

Mail Orders to:
CVK Publishing
PO Box 74-8086
Rego PK, NY 11374
(800) 556-7640
M-F 7PM-10PM EST

Heart Of A Killer
by Mike Cervello
ISBN 0-9654364-1-1
Retail $16.00 (525 pages)
S/H $3.00

BUNDLE DEAL:
Order both books and get free S/H ($20.95 Total) (NY please add sales tax.)

For late breaking news and specials, visit the CVK Publishing web site (A special deal may be waiting for you)

Press on: THE REFUGE OF NIGHT
"An exciting double dose of diversion for fans of horror fiction." --THE BOOK READER

"Reborn To Kill!"

An invisible cult of shape-shifting superhuman immortals is living among us with designs to destroy civilization. No mortal can stand against them.

The CVK Publishing Challenge.
*****Free on The Internet*******
See it in color and do your own book review. Read a free chapter of ***Heart Of a Killer*** on line and decide if you want to buy.
http://www.outcrybookreview.com/CVKpublishing.htm

Our most special agent, Dr. Lena Banks returns and has everything to lose if the cult succeeds. Hell gave her all of the equipment to destroy life. The government gave her all of the skills of a professional assassin with special forces training. All she lacks is the heart to use what she already has. She clashes head to head with the cult and her vampire maker. When the cult finds her mortal family, the real terror begins. She will go to any length to save them. But, does that mean she will violate her most sacred principle and kill? Does she really have it--the heart of a killer?

This book will also include a bonus novella and an interview plus art gallery with Heather J. McKinney, the artist who brings us the new look of Lena Banks. (Actual rear cover art to left.)

The Refuge Of Night
A Modern Vampire Myth
With A Bonus Tale Of
Renaissance Terror
by Mike Cervello
ISBN 0-9654364-0-3
Trade Paperback
70 pages
Price: **$6.38** which includes S/H. Make checks/money orders payable to: CVK Publishing
(NY please add sales tax.)

Beauty and the Beast

The 1999 Catalog comes out this spring.

To order a copy call:
1 (800) 998-5510

Fantasy Gifts

YOUR #1 SOURCE FOR:
Clocks, Polyresin Figures, Candle Holders, Lamps, Ashtrays, Lava Lites, Flasks, Jewelry, Sandtimers, and much more!

Call, Fax, E-mail, or write for FREE CATALOG:

◆

FANTASY GIFTS
147 West 35th St., Seventh Floor
New York, NY 10001

◆

Toll Free: 1-877-249-1376
Fax (212) 268-9855

E-Mail: SIDV9@aol.com
www.fantasy-gift.com

BOOKS

Continued from page 18

plexity and solidity of the thought which had to be worked out and tidied up and interrelated so that the two of them would be sufficiently prepared and equipped to dive into the actual writing of a series of large and complicated books.

Outside of the question of size, the aspect of this book which is most different from *The History of Middle Earth* is that it comes complete with an explanatory Introduction, Intermission, and Afterword by David Eddings himself. You can claw out some of this sort of thing from the biographies of Tolkien and his appendices and letters (if you're serious about studying J.R.R.T, by the way, you really should get hold of a copy of *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien, selected and edited by Humphrey Carpenter*. Which may or may not be in print) but here you have Eddings directly in your face doing his best (and his best is very good, indeed) to give you a no-nonsense, nuts-and-bolts discourse on how to go about building and writing epic fantasy.

Eddings comes from military background (as does his wife) and that is probably responsible for the mission control flavor that now and then creeps (or rather firmly marches) into the tone of his lectures. It is all to the good because this absolutely no-nonsense approach firmly underlines the simple but often unappreciated fact that while writing fantasies may involve a knack for the fey and a way with the gentle whimsey, it is also one hell of a tough racket requiring enormous discipline and a really astonishing amount of technical know-how.

Respectful harkening to the Eddings will convince you dragon herding is a bitch, especially if you're going to try it on the grand scale with a whole bunch of books which relate sensibly to one another and average something over four hundred pages each, but there is a huge amount of excellent advice here, simply and straightforwardly given, which will ease the way of anyone seriously contemplating building a fantasy world and then trying to sell. Special hint: The comments on archtypal images are golden. Worth the price of admission all by themselves.

Finally, just in case I may have misled you: *The Riven Codex* is by no means only to be perused as a textbook; it is also a marvelously entertaining read! ❧

Gahan Wilson

Black Butterflies *by John Shirley; Mark V. Ziesing, Shingletown, CA; 252 pp.; paperback; $16.95.*

A nightmarish California underworld of transvestite hustlers, street criminals, and drug addicts forms the hallucinatory milieu of John Shirley's striking new short story collection, *Black Butterflies*. The 16 stories in this new Horror collection are divided into two

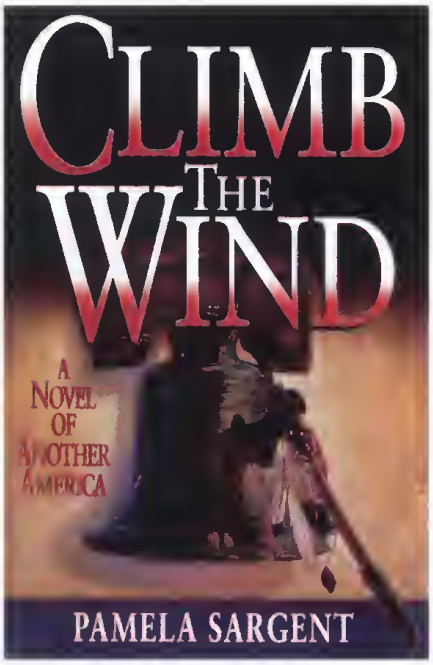
sections. The eight stories in "This World" are about the horrors of real life, while the stories in "That World" imagine fantastic horrors. But instead of two contrasting halves, the sequencing of the stories forms a rough progression, beginning with the most naturalistic and ending with a religious far-future fantasy, "Black Hole Sun, Won't You Come?" While that progression at times feels a bit forced, the sequencing also reveals an extremely successful second trajectory: from despair to hope.

This second progression becomes apparent in the next to last story, "Aftertaste," which resembles, and perhaps takes place in the world of, George Romero's Living Dead films. Here the zombies are former crack addicts returning to eat current users in search of their old high. As in earlier stories, the setting is realistic, described with the authority of firsthand experience, and its bluntly explicit horrors are depicted with the same deliberately flat, offhand prose. But the characters in "Aftertaste" undergo a change much different than those in earlier stories.

Earlier stories lead characters on journeys in which they discover that things are even worse than they had feared. In "Barbara," two young carjackers discover that their seemingly defenseless victim is more dangerous than they are. In "War and Peace," an LA cop suspects that his increasingly twisted partner may be a murderer. In "You Hear What Buddy and Ray Did?" the mayhem is so random and hyperbolic that it resembles one of S. Clay Wilson's underground comics. In contrast, the two human antagonists of "Aftertaste" find not just a common purpose but hope for their futures. Most of the other stories aim for surrealism, not naturalism. Interestingly, those set in the real world are just as successful at creating images of dreamlike power as those that aren't. The mangled bodies in the subway disaster in "Cram" become as psycho-sexually intense as the demons and monsters in "Pearldoll" and "Flaming Telepaths." The imagery of "The Rubber Smile," a realistic probe into the psychological appeal of violence, is as heightened as the whacked-out "The Exquisitely Bleeding Heads of Doktur Palmer Vreedeez," in which kidnapped celebrities such as Michael Jackson and Stephen King are used as living gargoyles. Surrealism is in the eye of the beholder. Perhaps not coincidently, the youngest and most imaginative characters give rise to the best and most horrifying stories: "Answering Machine," an answering machine message describing some wasted, troubled teens who commit an unforgettable atrocity in a junk yard, and "Delia and the Dinner Party," about a severely withdrawn 11 year old who confronts the adult world through the eyes of a gruesome spirit.

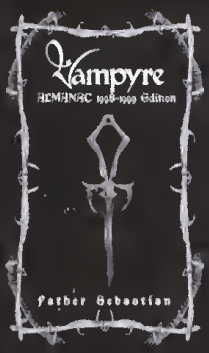
What all the stories have in common is wild inventiveness and relentless intensity. *Black Butterflies* is an excellent collection, both well crafted and disturbing, not least because the unity of its disparate contents suggests that horror doesn't lie in either reality or the supernatural but in the dark recesses of the reader's own mind.

Jeanne Cavelos



The United States might not be so united if Pamela Sargent's alternate vision had occurred.

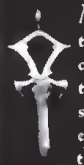
Endless Night



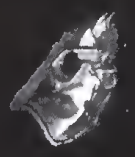
Vampyres Almanac, 1998-1999 Edition is the first edition in an annually updated and expanded guide to the Vampyre Connection. The first printing will contain. Each copy includes a Vampyre Connection Ankh. Edited by Katherine Ramsland, Anne Rice biographer. $13 + $3 ea. S&H.

Vampyre Connection Ankhs

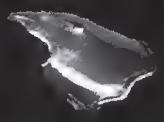
The Vampyre Ankh is inspired by the bladed ankh used by the priests of Horus in ancient Egypt for bloodletting rites. It is the sigil of the Vampyre Connection, a network of like-minded individuals, households, organizations and havens (vamp nightclubs) who cater to the vampyre aesthetic and lifestyle. Designed by Master Metal Manipulator D'drennan, this piece is a sigil of community for members of the vampyre scene and a subtle way to identify each other. Available in three different styles a Sterling Silver - $50 ea. or Small Vampyre Ankh - $25 ea. Nickel silver copy is available with the Vampyres Almanac.



VAMPIRE THUMB CLAWS



Mradu - $20 ea.



Key to the Underworld $10 ea.

Mradu - $20 ea.

Send check or MO to:
Endless Night
175 5th Ave. Suite 2669 R10,
NY, NY 10010
Please allow 4-6 wks for delivery
Web: www.endlessnight.com
NYCvampline (212) 615-6666

© 1999 Endless Night

Contributors

JOE MASTROIANNI is a writer, musician, husband, and father of three who doubles as a West Coast electronics company executive. His previous works can be found in the pages of *Tomorrow* and *QST*. He is a rabid mountain biker and his other hobbies include home studio recording, ham radio, and frequent out-of-body astral voyages. Joe's current writing project is a full-length novel about sex, technology, greed, and astral projection in Silicon Valley.

M. SHAYNE BELL has sold more than 33 stories to various magazines and publications including *Amazing Stories*, *Asimov's*, and *Tomorrow*. His short story entitled "Mrs. Lincoln's China" was a finalist for the 1995 Hugo Award. His stories and poems have been translated into six languages. His second novel, *Inuit*, won first place in the 1997 Utah Original Writing Competition and his agent is currently marketing it. M. Shayne Bell also edited the anthology *Washed by a Wave of Wind: Science Fiction from the Corridor*, for which he received an AML award for editorial excellence.

CHRISTOPHER ROWE has received a message from Ellen Datlow that she is giving "Kin to Crows," (first appearance in *Realms*) an Honorable Mention next year in the "Year's Best" anthology that she does with Terri Windling. He is currently in the process of moving from Kentucky to Michigan. Christopher says that Kentucky will always be "home," and that on one trip back in the spring he will be doing a reading of "Baptism on Bittersweet Creek" at Lindsey Wilson College in Adair County (accompanied by the appropriate gospel songs sung by members of his family, of course).

TIM MEYERS won a national poetry contest judged by John Updike and has published over 70 poems (recently in *Southern Humanities Review* and *Eclectic Poetry Forum*). He currently teaches writing at SUNY Plattsburg and does some professional storytelling as well. "Arthur's Wishes" marks his first appearance in *Realms*.

Jeanne Cavelos

Christopher Rowe

JEANNE CAVELOS runs a free-lance editing company and teaches writing, fantasy literature, and publishing at Saint Anselm College. Before moving to New Hampshire, Jeanne was a senior editor at Dell Publishing. She is currently enjoying the success of her new novel, *The Science of the X-Files*.

MICHAEL GIBBS is a free-lance illustrator working in Alexandria, Virginia. His unique style combines traditional painting and digital media. Michael's work has appeared in *Realms of Fantasy* as well as many other magazines, publications, and books. He has received national and regional recognition for his work, including awards from the "Society of Illustrators," "Communication Arts" magazines and others. He is also the proud father of a two-year-old daughter.

WEB BRYANT's artistic skills cross many disciplines in commercial art. He was part of the design team that created *USA Today*. Other achievements include art directing the first national children's newspaper, *Pennywhistle Press*, and creating national award-winning maps and graphics. His first love is painting, especially when he can work with the wonders of natural and directional light.

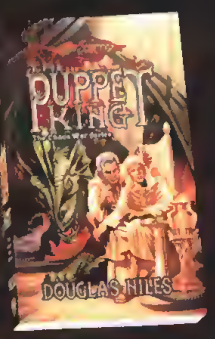
GARY LIPPINCOTT illustrates children's books. He recently completed a Young Adult fantasy for Harcourt Brace and is working for two publishers on two fantasy covers, both involving wizards. He lives on a farm in central Massachusetts with his wife and children.

JANET AULISIO is hard at work on a personal series of paintings, in addition to her commissioned work for many of the SF field's major magazines.

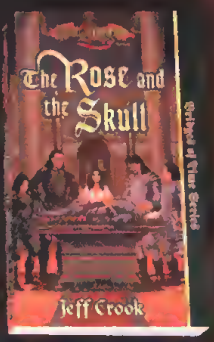
STRINGS ARE PULLED

The Puppet King
Douglas Niles
The Chaos War Series
Available Now

As war and destruction spread across Ansalon, the elven ruler Gilthas must make a fateful choice. Will he lead his people to triumph or despair?



A TRUCE IS BROKEN



The Rose and the Skull
Jeff Crook
Bridges of Time Series
Available March

Jeff Crook's novel tells of the Knights of Solamnia, the greatest knightly order on Krynn, faced with what may be their greatest challenge. Will their alliance, forged by Lord Gunthar during the last days of the Chaos War, survive?

AN EVIL IS UNLEASHED

Spectre of the Black Rose
James Lowder and
Voronica Whitney-Robinson
Ravenloft Series
Available March

In this chilling sequel to the best-selling *Knight of the Black Rose*, factions vie for control of Sithicus as the darklord, Lord Soth, fights to keep his reign from crumbling.

DragonLance

Questions? Call (800) 324-6496
Visit our website at www.tsr.com

Dragonlance, TSR, and related logos are registered trademarks of TSR, Inc. TSR, Inc. is a subsidiary of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©1998 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

© 1999 The 3DO Company. All Rights Reserved. Might and Magic, For Blood and Honor, New World Computing, 3DO, and their respective logos are trademarks and/or service marks of The 3DO Company in the U.S. and other countries. All other trademarks belong to their respective owners. New World Computing is a division of The 3DO Company.